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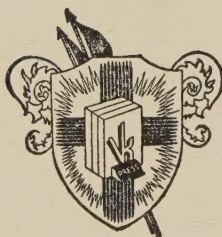
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God's Prophecies for Plain People

WILLIAM L. PETTINGILL, D.D.



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¶ *This book consists of a series of articles written for THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TIMES and appearing in that periodical during 1919.*

¶ *The Editor of THE TIMES, at the beginning of the series, invited readers to ask questions on the topics treated, and these questions were answered by the author. The questions and answers will be found in the Prophetic Question Box at the end of the book.*



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The Truth about Christ's Second Coming

“MAKE it plain.” Thus Jehovah spake to his servant Habakkuk twenty-five hundred years ago, and He was speaking about the Second Coming of Christ, though His First Coming was yet six hundred years in the future when the words were spoken.

The record is in Habakkuk's second chapter. “I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower,” says the prophet, “and will look forth to see what He will speak with me, and what I shall answer concerning my complaint. And Jehovah answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tablets, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for the appointed time, and it hasteth toward the end, and shall not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not delay.”

That this Scripture has to do with the Second Coming of Christ is proved by the use made of it by the Holy Spirit in the New Testament. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, chapter 10, it is quoted, with changes—which, of course, the divine Author of both Habakkuk and Hebrews had a perfect right to make; and there we read: “But ye have

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need of patience, that, having done the will of God, ye may receive the promise. For yet a very little while, he that cometh shall come, and shall not tarry" (vs. 36, 37).

"Write the vision, and make it plain upon tablets, that he may run that readeth it." Not, as it is so often put, "that he that runneth may read it," but that the one who has read it may run with it to others—"that he may run that readeth it." Two and a half millenniums were to elapse before its fulfillment, but nevertheless "the vision is yet for the appointed time," and just as Messiah's First Advent was precisely according to schedule—"in due time Christ died for the ungodly"; so shall it be with His Second Advent. The vision "hasteth toward the end, and shall not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not delay." Our God needs not to hurry, and with Him a thousand years is but one day. Nineteen centuries seem long to us, but with Him they are less than two days. It is well, therefore, to be patient. "For yet a very little while, he that cometh shall come, and shall not tarry."

Starting Off on the Right Foot

"Make it plain," said Jehovah. And "make

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it plain," said the Editor of the Sunday School Times. Having in mind the ever incoming number of new readers, the Editor is concerned that these shall be taught in clear and simple language the plain truth about Christ's Second Coming.

Let us get it settled, to start with, that the Bible is true, and that we may receive what it says with unquestioning faith. Unless this point is settled, we cannot go on. To those who are truly born again, no difficulty is presented here. It was the Good Shepherd Himself who said, "My sheep hear My voice," and it is true that the Christian recognizes in Scripture the voice of Christ, Whose word is the last word, and Whose testimony settles everything.

Starting, then, with the premise that the Bible always speaks truly and with authority, we go on to inquire as to just what it says about the Second Coming of Christ. Turning from all human authority,—for in the last analysis there is no such thing as human authority in the realm of spiritual things,—we come to the fountain of truth. What does the Bible say?

In two ways we shall attempt to bring forth an intelligent and intelligible answer to our question, What does the Bible say?

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First, in addition to this introductory article, there will be fifteen articles in the series.

Then, in addition to this, a Question Box on Prophecy will be conducted in connection with the series of articles, in which an honest attempt will be made to answer questions from readers as we go along. Controversy and prolonged discussion will be avoided, and answers to such questions as are to come up later on will be deferred until we reach their place in the schedule. Let us think of the series as a class in the Bible School room, and, so far as conditions may permit, let us conduct ourselves accordingly.

Among the Lord's people there are, broadly speaking, two widely divergent views of the age in which we live. By far the larger number, it would seem, hold what may be termed the "evolution theory" of the course of the age. The minority, on the other hand, cleave to a "revolution theory." The former insist that everything is growing better and better all the time, tending toward a Millennium of universal blessing, winding up in the return of Christ at the end of the thousand years. Those who hold this view are convinced that it is the mission of the Church to make the world better by improving social

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conditions, thus bringing in the Millennium of world-blessing and preparing the world to receive and welcome Christ "at the end of all things."

Opposed to this view are those who believe that instead of the world's growing better it is growing worse. They look upon the present world-system as a sinking ship, with, however, the lifeboat alongside, and they are urging men to separate themselves from the doomed vessel and to take refuge in Christ the Lifeboat. They look for no Millennium until Christ comes to bring it in. Instead of bringing in the Millennium by means of social improvement and civic betterment, they insist that it must be brought in by God's heavy hand in judgment. These are the *premillennialists*, so called because they expect the Second Coming of Christ *before* the Millennium. The others are called *post-millennialists*, because they expect the Second Coming of Christ after the Millennium has run its course.

Sailing in the "Safety Zone"

Who shall decide which of these schools is right? We answer, The Bible must decide. What saith the Scriptures? This shall be the question constantly before us through-

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out our course of studies. What does the Bible say? What it says, we must believe. What it denies, we must reject. "To the law and the testimony! If they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them."

Many say it is all a matter of interpretation. Well, in this classroom of ours we shall avoid matters of interpretation. We shall confine ourselves to the Bible's plain statements, statements which will need no interpretation. This will keep us all the time in the "safety zone," and we shall not lose our way in the maze of speculation.

To come now to the real work in hand, let us begin with a brief look at the Old Testament Scriptures, to learn whether they require a Second Coming of Christ. In I Peter 1:11 a brief summary is given of Old Testament prophecy. The Apostle declares that the Old Testament Prophets searched diligently, to learn "what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ Who was in them did signify, when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." The *sufferings* and the *glory*—these were the two themes of the Prophets. These two lines of prophecy confused the Prophets themselves, through whom the

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Holy Spirit gave the testimony ; and, as Peter goes on to explain, it was revealed to them that not unto themselves did they minister these things, but unto those who should live long after their time.

There is, for example, the Twenty-second Psalm, which has been called "the Psalm of Sobs," depicting so vividly the *sufferings* of Christ on the Cross. But there is also the Twenty-fourth Psalm, setting forth His *glory*. His *sufferings* fill the fifty-third of Isaiah, but His *glory*, as the King enthroned, fills the eleventh and many other chapters in that Prophet's writings. Every student of the Scriptures is familiar with these two sharply contrasting streams of prophetic testimony, which so puzzled the rabbinical commentators in the time before Christ's First Advent that some of them declared there must be two Messiahs coming,—one to fulfill the prophesied *sufferings* and the other to be *glorified* in the Earth. Sometimes these two lines of testimony converged in one passage, as, for example, Isaiah 9:6, 7, where a colon divides between the *sufferings* and the *glory*; the Child has been born, and the Son has been given—even unto death; but the government is not yet upon His shoulder, and He does not yet occupy His

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father David's throne. In the time yet future "the zeal of the Lord of hosts shall perform" even "this." Another example is found in Isaiah 61:1, 2, which was the passage read by the Lord Jesus when He preached in His little home-town of Nazareth, and in which He stopped reading at a comma in the second verse in order that He might say, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." He could not have said that if He had read another clause of the sentence He had begun.

Well, in due time Christ came, and, beginning with His birth at Bethlehem, fulfilling Micah 5:2, He went straight through the prophecies concerning His *sufferings*, until even the last jot and tittle of them were accomplished, and then He died and rose again, still fulfilling the Scriptures. But, while all the predictions concerning His *sufferings* were fulfilled, not so much as a single syllable was fulfilled of that far greater mass of predictions pointing to His *glory*. The Old Testament demands a Second Coming of Christ for the fulfillment of these unfulfilled predictions.

Added to the Old Testament Scriptures, demanding His return for their fulfillment, there is the oft-repeated promise of the Lord Jesus Himself that He would return,

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"in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory." There is no mistaking the words, "I will come again," and practically all His teaching on the subject of His return is just as simple as that.

The Way Christ Made it Plain

Let our class study, carefully and prayerfully, without commentary or other "helps," the Olivet Discourse of our Lord, recorded in Matthew 24 and 25, and Luke 21. We shall be looking at it somewhat in detail later on in the course; but please notice how very simple the language is, descriptive though it is of most wonderful and glorious "things which must shortly come to pass." And, for our present purpose, let it be observed that the Second Coming of Christ is not to be in a time of Millennial blessedness and peace, but at a time of darkness and evil. It will be like the days of Noah (Matt. 24: 37), when things were so bad that God swept the race from the Earth; or like the days of Lot (see Luke 17:28, 29), when the corruption of Sodom and Gomorrah smelled to Heaven and brought down the destructive hail of fire and brimstone to wipe them out of existence. "So shall also the coming of the Son of Man be."

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Thus saith the Scripture. It needs no "interpretation," for it is so plain that interpretation is a work of supererogation. It speaks clearly, and we have only to believe what it says. To believe it is to believe God. To disbelieve it is to make God a liar. May the Holy Spirit of Truth, always ready to guide the children of God into all truth, give us hearts to follow as He leads our class throughout these studies; and may the result be that we shall be led into the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ, so having this hope in Him that we shall indeed purify ourselves, even as He is pure !

The “Rapture” and the First Resurrection

WHAT does the “Rapture” mean? Since we have adopted “Make it plain” as our slogan in this Bible Class, we need to be careful about definitions as we proceed.

The dictionary will show you that “rapture” comes from the root which means *to be caught up*. The use of the word in connection with the study of prophecy is based upon the closing paragraph of I Thessalonians 4, that is, verses 13 to 18:

But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope

For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.

For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent [i. e. precede] them which are asleep.

For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

There is no question, I believe, as to the date of this Epistle; all agree that it was Paul’s very first contribution to the New

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Testament, and many believe it to have been the first written among all the books of the New Testament. We shall therefore make no mistake in starting here.

It is evident that First Thessalonians was written in reply to hard questions sent from Thessalonica to Paul by his friend and fellow-laborer Timothy. The 17th chapter of Acts and the 3rd chapter of First Thessalonians will make this clear. Paul had labored in Thessalonica only two or three weeks when his enemies drove him out of the city. Since his departure many perplexing problems had confronted the young converts there. Paul had taught them that when they turned to God from idols it was "to serve the living and true God; and to wait for His Son from Heaven" (I Thes. 1 : 9, 10). He had not talked much about the death of believers, but since he had gone from them some of their number had died. Through Timothy they sent an inquiry to Paul concerning these Christians who were dying. What had become of them? and what should be their relation to the great ever-imminent event of which he had told them, that is, the catching away of the church to meet her Lord?

First Thessalonians is Paul's answer to

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this and other questions. The dead in Christ were with their Lord, and those alive and remaining should in no wise precede them when the Lord should come for His own. That coming for His own was something to be constantly waited for; it might take place at any time. Their place was to serve and to wait. All through the Epistle these things are stressed, and in most of the later Epistles of Paul to the churches they were among the subjects treated. Nothing is more insisted upon than that the saints should be continually in the attitude of expectancy in view of the imminent rapture of the church.

"Out from Among Dead Ones"

The Rapture of the church, as is seen from the Scripture already quoted, is linked up with the resurrection of the saved. I say "of the saved," for the lost will not be raised from the dead at the same time with the saved. The resurrection of the saved "is the first resurrection," as Revelation 20:4 puts it. The whole passage reads:

And I saw thrones, and they [the armies from Heaven—19:14] sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped the Beast [the wicked king of the 13th chapter], neither his image, neither had

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received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived [literally lived again, or revived], and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

Just here it is proper to explain that the word "millennium" comes from this expression, "a thousand years." It comes to us through the Latin *mille*=a thousand; *annum*=year. The passage goes on:

But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years (Rev. 20:5, 6).

Then follows a description of what comes after the Millennium, all of which we hope to study together at a later point in our series.

There are, then, two resurrections instead of one. And the two are separated from each other by a thousand years. The first resurrection is premillennial, or before the Millennium; while the second resurrection is post-millennial, or after the Millennium. The first resurrection is only of the saved; the second resurrection is only of the lost.

But now we need to turn to the 5th chapter of John to clear up a point in connection with this part of our subject. Here, in verse 24, a resurrection—that is, a coming to life from the dead—is described, but it is spiritual resurrection:

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Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

That is spiritual resurrection, clearly enough; it is what takes place when a man is born again. And so also it is in the next verse, the 25th:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.

Resurrection, Bodily and Spiritual

This, I say, is spiritual resurrection also; for the Lord said, "The hour is *coming*, and *now is*." Bodily resurrection is not yet, but spiritual resurrection now is. Every time the Gospel is preached—and the Gospel is certainly "the voice of the Son of God"—every time it is preached to lost men, it is preached to those that are dead—dead in their trespasses and sins. Some will, by the power of the grace of God, hear that voice; and they that hear—they that hearken—shall live. That is resurrection. It is a coming out of death into life. And yet it is spiritual, and not bodily, resurrection.

Now let us go to the 28th and 29th verses of our chapter; and there we shall find bodily resurrection:

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Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice.

And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

Standing by itself, this statement would seem to teach a simultaneous resurrection of all, the saved and the lost, at the same time. But, let it be noted, the "hour" of verse 25 has already lasted for nineteen hundred years. Why, then, should not the "hour" of verse 28 endure through the thousand years of the Millennium? Even here, in verse 29, two resurrections are named—one unto life, and one unto damnation. In Luke 14:14 the first resurrection is called "the resurrection of the just."

There are hints in the teaching of the Lord Jesus which seem to show how His own mind was often occupied with anticipation of that great day of the Rapture of the church and the resurrection of His beloved ones. For example, there is the parallelism easily traced between His own words in the opening verses of John 14 and Paul's words in the 4th chapter of First Thessalonians already quoted at length in this study:

Our Lord said, "Let not your heart be troubled." Paul said, "Comfort one another with these words."

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The Lord said, "Ye believe in God, believe also in Me." Paul said, "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him."

The Lord said, "If it were not so, I would have told you." Paul said, "This we say unto you by the word of the Lord" (literally, *by a word from the Lord*; that is, from the Lord Jesus' own mouth).

The Lord said, "I will come again." Paul said, "The Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven."

The Lord said, "and receive you unto Myself." Paul said, "We...shall be caught up...to meet the Lord in the air."

The Lord said, "That where I am, there ye may be also." Paul said, "and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

The parallel is too complete to be accidental. It is of the Spirit of God.

There is another such parallelism in connection with I Corinthians 15:51-54, a passage so familiar as to have lost its point with many who seem to think it has no important place outside the funeral ritual. But let us look at it as something new, just as if we had never seen it before. Let the members of our class put themselves by imagination in

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the home of, say, Aquila and Priscilla, on the night when perhaps the church of Corinth met in their house to hear the latest news of their beloved Paul (I Cor. 16:19). The meeting comes to order, and some one announces that there is a letter from the Apostle to be read to the assembly. Imagine, if you can, the tremendous impact upon your own ears when the startling language is read:

Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep.

Doesn't Everybody Have to Die?

In modern phraseology this means: "Listen! I have a secret to tell you. Not all of us shall die!"

Whatever could the man mean? Everybody knows that we must all die. No. That is the great mystery now revealed, the wonderful secret never before made known.

Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.

In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

For this corruptible must put on incorruption [literally, incorruptibility], and this mortal must put on immortality.

So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption [literally, incorruptibility], and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

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Now, the parallelism. Let the class turn to John 11:20-26, and note carefully the language:

Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him: but Mary sat still in the house.

Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

But I know, that even now, whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, God will give it Thee.

Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.

Martha saith unto Him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead [literally, though he die], yet shall he live:

And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this?

Here is language that confuses the commentators, and it defies all intelligent or intelligible exposition until the parallelism is seen to which reference has been made. It is as clear as the noonday sun that the Lord Jesus, who was about to enact a miniature representation of "the resurrection at the last day," had the scenes of that day in mind while talking to Martha. When that day arrives—the day of the first resurrection—He Who is the Resurrection and the Life will do on a large scale what He did in the Bethany burying-ground when He called His friend Lazarus out of the grave. But He will also

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do much more than raise dead men to life. On the great day that is coming He will speak out of Heaven the word of power, and "he that believeth in" Him, "though he were dead"—that is, though since believing he has died—"yet shall he live." As Paul puts it, "the dead shall be raised incorruptible." And as for those other believers, those who "are alive and remain," our Lord declares: "Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." Again, the parallel is complete. It is impossible to regard it as accidental. It fits as the hand in the glove. It is of God's Spirit.

So, then, death does *not* await all God's children. Some shall not die. The Lord Jesus may at any moment say the word, "Come up hither!" (Rev. 4:1), which shall draw His own—the quick and the dead—up to Himself in the air. For this we are to look, for this we are to wait, and in this hope we are to live. Blessed hope! How it should lay hold upon us. How it should mould our lives! What a pity that we have not learned it, and been gripped by it! for it is written that "every man that hath this hope set on Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." May it be even so with all who follow with us in these studies! May every

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day be lived in the power of the God-given truth that before the day is ended we may be "caught up...to meet the Lord in the air!"

"Caught up! Caught up! No wing required
Caught up to Him by love inspired,
To meet Him in the air.
Spurning the Earth with upward bound,
Nor casting a single glance around,
Nor listing a single earthborn sound,
Caught up in the radiant air!

"Caught up! with rapture and surprise;
Caught up! our fond affections rise,
Our coming Lord to meet.
Hearing the trumpet's glorious sound,
Soaring to join the rising crowd,
Gazing beyond the parted cloud,
Beneath His pierced feet!

"O, blessed! O thrice blessed word!
To be for ever with the Lord,
In heav'nly beauty fair!
Up! Up! We long to hear the cry!
Up! Up! Our absent Lord draws nigh!
Yes, in the twinkling of an eye,
Caught up in the radiant air."

The Marriage Supper and the Wedding

“BLESSED are they that are bidden to the marriage supper of the Lamb.”

The book of The Revelation of Jesus Christ has seven beatitudes:

1. “Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things that are written therein: for the time is at hand” (1:3). In connection with no other book of the Bible is there such a promise of special reward for its study.

2. “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works follow with them” (14:13). To die in the Lord is always blessed; but at the particular time and in the particular circumstances referred to here there will be peculiar blessing for those who, resisting the tide of world-wide idolatry, and refusing to receive upon their persons the mark of the Beast, or to worship His image, shall be beheaded for the testimony of Jesus. “From henceforth” are the emphatic words.

3. “Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame” (16:15). Like the preceding “Blessed,” this one is for the end-

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time, after the church has been caught up to meet her Lord, and during the awful scenes of the Great Tribulation upon the Earth. The imagery is that of the sleeping sentinel, whose outer garment is taken away by his superior officer who finds him sleeping on duty. "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth."

4. "Blessed are they that are bidden to the marriage supper of the Lamb" (19:9). This is to occupy us in our present study.

Happy and Holy—and Up!

5. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: over these the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years" (20:6). This first resurrection is ever imminent; it may occur at any moment, and it will include all the dead in Christ, of all the ages, and all those, in Christ, who are alive and remaining at his coming. Blessed, indeed, to be in that company!

6. "Blessed is he that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book" (22:7). Again the "Blessed" is linked with the coming "quickly"—suddenly, without further warning—of the Son of Man, to judge the world in

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righteousness. Let his dear ones in that end-time be careful to observe "the words of the prophecy of this book." And for us also, there is blessing for spending much time and care upon the understanding of this "unveiling" of the Son of God.

7. "Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have the right to come to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city" (22:14). The Revisers have done good work in this verse—I have quoted the Revision—restoring to it its proper meaning. The tree of life and access to that city are not the reward of obedience—the keeping of commandments, as the King James Version has it,—but rather a gift to those who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb.

We are now to look into the fourth of these beatitudes. It is best to have the context before us. The nineteenth chapter opens with a scene of rejoicing on account of the destruction of "Babylon." This is ecclesiastical Babylon, or apostate Christendom, headed up in the papal system. It is "the great harlot,...that corrupted the Earth with her fornication." She included the false professing church, calling itself Christian, but at heart opposed to Christ. She claimed

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to be the bride of Christ, but now His servants are filling Heaven with hallelujahs because she has come to her awful end.

In the sixth verse the scene changes. John writes:

And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, Hallelujah: for the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigneth. Let us rejoice and be exceeding glad, and let us give the glory unto Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And it was given unto her that she should array herself in fine linen, bright and pure: for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

And He saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they that are bidden to the marriage supper of the Lamb. And He saith unto me, These are true words of God.

The Lamb, of course, is our Lord Jesus Christ. But who is the bride? Undoubtedly, the church, although there is some difference of opinion about this, and some godly and enlightened teachers hold that the bride is Israel. That Israel is a wife is true. But she is not, nor can she be, the bride. In Isaiah 54 and Hosea 2 it is seen that Israel is the Old Testament wife of Jehovah, guilty of spiritual adultery and repudiated of her Husband, though yet to be wooed and won back to Him and His house. But the New Testament church is Christ's affianced bride, espoused unto Him as a chaste virgin (Eph.

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5:25-33; II Cor. 11:2, 3). An adulterous wife, though forgiven and restored, can never be called a bride, and certainly not a virgin.

But the church is also Christ's body (Eph. 1:22, 23), which fact has been urged against her being His bride. She is both His bride and His body, as was Eve in her relation to Adam. Comparison of Genesis 2:21-24 with Ephesians 5:28-32 will make this clear.

In the twenty-first chapter of The Revelation there is a picture of "the bride, the wife of the Lamb," which is seen to be identified with "the holy city Jerusalem, coming down out of Heaven from God, having the glory of God," and into which none shall enter "but only they that are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Compare Heb. 12:23). This must not be confused with the Earthly Jerusalem, which itself is to be rebuilt in Millennial glory for the Earthly "City of the Great King"; and which is to be the center for redeemed Israel in the kingdom age. The Heavenly Jerusalem is a city distinct from the Earthly capital; it is the church, the Lamb's wife and queen, sharing in His kingdom glory, located in the air, over the Earth, "as both the place and the means of the manifestation of God who dwells in it" (Scofield).

THE MARRIAGE SUPPER AND THE WEDDING

“A Tale of Two Cities!”

The Earthly and Heavenly cities are distinguished in Scripture with great clearness. The Jerusalem that “now is,” writes Paul to the Galatians, “is in bondage with her children. But the Jerusalem that is above is free, which is our mother” (Gal. 4:25, 26). The Earthly city’s Millennial glory is described in the final chapters of Ezekiel; its exact measurements are in the last paragraph of the last chapter. It is to be about nine miles square, with a magnificent temple a mile square (Ezekiel 42). But this will be small indeed, compared with the Heavenly city, “twelve thousands furlongs”—or fifteen hundred miles, long, and broad, and high! “The length and the breadth and the height thereof are equal” (Rev. 21:16). The Heavenly city has no temple save “the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb” (Rev. 21:22).

“O mother dear Jerusalem,
When shall I come to thee?
When shall my sorrows have an end?
Thy joys when shall I see?

“O happy harbor of God’s saints!
O sweet and pleasant soil!
In thee no sorrow can be found—
No grief, no care, nor toil.

“O my sweet home, Jerusalem,
Thy joys when shall I see—
The King that sitteth on thy throne
In his felicity?

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"Right through thy streets, with silver sound,
The living waters flow,
And on the banks, on either side,
The trees of life do grow.

"Those trees for evermore bear fruit,
And evermore do spring:
There evermore the angels are,
And evermore do sing.

"Jerusalem, my happy home,
Would God I were in thee!
Would God my woes were at an end,
Thy joys that I might see!"

The marriage takes place in Heaven by which the Lamb and His bride are joined in an eternal union. It seems that there are to be two marriage feasts—one in Heaven, and one on the Earth, the latter when the Bridegroom returns with His bride to set up the Kingdom promised unto the fathers through the Prophets. This is the coming pictured in the Parable of the Ten Virgins, in Matthew 25:1-13. I am convinced that the Latin Vulgate has the true translation here, adding the words "and bride" to the first verse of the chapter, so that it reads, "Then shall the Kingdom of Heaven be likened unto ten virgins, who took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom and bride." The Vulgate also reads "marriage feast" instead of "marriage" in verse 10. The Revised Version has made the latter of these changes. The ancient Syriac Peshito Version has the

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same reading as the Vulgate, Murdock's translation of the first verse being:

Then may the Kingdom of Heaven be shadowed forth by ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom and bride.

The Bride and the Bridesmaids

The scene is Jewish. The ten virgins represent Jews of the end-time who profess loyalty to the coming King. The lamps are the Word of God, "a lamp unto our feet." The oil is the Holy Spirit, without Whom the lamp cannot be "a light unto our path."

This plural virgin type is employed elsewhere in Scripture, and it always points to the Jewish remnant of the end-time. See, for example, Revelation 14:1-5, and compare Revelation 7:1-8. In Psalm 45:14 the Jewish remnant appears, in the presence of the bride, as "the virgins her companions that follow her." I have already referred to the virgin type of the church in II Corinthians 11:2, 3, but it is a singular type and not plural. It is not in keeping with the manner of Scripture to employ plural types of the church. There is always insistence and emphasis upon the unity of the body.

This, then, is what lies just ahead for those who during this age have put their

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trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, thus becoming "members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones," and also constituting His bride. For her, the spouse of Christ, the queen of the King, the city that hath foundations, whose Maker and Builder is God, is prepared. He Who said, "I go to prepare a place for you," is faithful to His promise, and is longing for His bride. "And," said He, "if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and take you unto Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." "Amen, even so, come, Lord Jesus!" To be with Thee will be Heaven enough, and our eyes are already ravished as by faith we behold "the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward."

"Blessed city, Heavenly Salem,
Vision dear of peace and love,
Who of living stones art builded
In the height of Heaven above,
And, with angel hosts encircled,
As a bride doth Earthward move.

"From celestial realms descending,
Bridal glory round thee shed,
Meet for Him whose love espoused thee,
To thy Lord shalt thou be led;
All thy streets, and all thy bulwarks
Of pure gold are fashioned.

"Many a blow and biting sculpture
Polished well those stones elect,
In their places now compacted
By the Heavenly Architect,
Who therewith hath willed forever
That His palace should be decked.

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"Laud and honor to the Father,
Laud and honor to the Son,
Laud and honor to the Spirit,
Ever Three, and ever One,
Consubstantial, co-eternal,
While unending ages run."

What Occurs at Christ's Judgment Seat

REAL difficulty in connection with the study of the Word of Prophecy is presented in the fact that so many things need to be unlearned by most of us before we can get a real start. We are apt to come to the study with our minds already made up regarding the subject in hand. An example of this is related to our subject for the present study. The mention of a Judgment Seat is likely to bring before the mind's eye the terrible scenes of "the Last and General Judgment," when all who have ever lived will stand before the throne of God to have it determined where each soul shall spend eternity. Such an idea, however, is entirely foreign to Scripture, which, despite the contrary views of commentators and hymn-writers, knows nothing about a "General Judgment."

Many Judgments are found in the Bible, but none of them may properly be called a General Judgment. Let us look at seven Bible Judgments:

First. On the Cross of Calvary, nearly nineteen hundred years ago, our *sins* were judged, and the penalty of death was borne for us by the Son of God in vicarious and sub-

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stitutionary sacrifice. In God's reckoning we ourselves died there; therefore, since God is righteous, we shall never again be brought into jeopardy on account of *sin*. This is the heart of the Gospel,—the good news of our salvation through the death and resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Thus it is that, according to our Lord's own testimony, the believer "hath eternal life, and *cometh not into judgment*, but hath passed out of death into life" (John 5:24, R. V.). And, again, as it is written in Romans 8:1, R. V., "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." On Calvary, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them;...for He hath made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (II Cor. 5:19-21). On the cross, Christ was "made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal. 3:13).

The Believer's Wonderful Position

Let us never cease to praise God for Him "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by Whose

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stripes ye were healed" (I Peter 2:24); and let it be remembered that when the Son of God hung on the cross it was for us that He hung there, and that He suffered for our sins, "the Just for the Unjust, that He might bring us to God" (I Peter 3:18). He was indeed "delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. 4:25). The believer, according to God's righteous reckoning, is in the position of a criminal who has been executed, and then raised from the dead into a new life.

"Death and Judgment are behind us,
Grace and glory are before;
All the billows rolled o'er Jesus,
There they spent their utmost power.

"Jesus died, and we died with Him,
Buried in His grave we lay,
One with Him in resurrection,
Now 'in Him' in Heaven's bright day."

Second. In the New Testament there is frequent mention of a Judgment concerning which the believer is constantly exhorted. It is the Judgment of *self*. Self-judgment is supernatural and superhuman. It can be done only in the dynamic energy of the Holy Spirit. But unless it is faithfully done, God, Who is a faithful Father, is under obligation to take the matter in hand, and the result in such a case is, not condemnation, but chastening. This particular form of judg-

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ment begins and ends with the house of God, for when judgment has to do with the world the sure result is condemnation. God condemns the world and chastens his children. "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons" (Heb. 12:7).

In the Corinthian church there was a man living in sinful relations with his father's wife, that is to say, his step-mother. He refused to judge himself, and the church was directed by apostolical authority to hold a meeting "in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, . . . and . . . with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (I Cor. 5:1-5). This man was evidently brought to self-judgment and restored to fellowship (II Cor. 2:5-7).

But, on the other hand, there were others in that same Corinthian church who were not brought to judge themselves, and who were actually made sick, and some of them taken away by physical death under God's chastening hand, and yet they were not condemned. This is recorded in I Corinthians 11:26-32. The trouble was connected with the observance of the Lord's Supper:

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For as often as ye eat this bread,...ye do shew the Lord's death till He come.

Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily [in an unworthy manner, R. V.], shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily [in an unworthy manner, R. V.], eateth and drinketh judgment [so the text should read, as in R. V.] to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the World.

Third. Our *works* as Christians are to come up for Judgment before the Judgment Seat of Christ in the Heavens. This will follow the Rapture of the church, and will take place during our absence from the Earth between the Rapture and the Revelation of Christ and His saints in His Second Advent to the Earth. This is the subject of our study for this week, but we pass it by for the moment, returning to it after reviewing briefly the other four Judgments.

Fourth. The Judgment of the *Living Nations* found upon the Earth at the Second Advent of Christ. This is described in the 25th chapter of Matthew, and is to form the

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subject of a subsequent study. Let it be noted in passing that this Judgment of Nations has almost nothing in common with the Judgment of Believers' Works, nor yet with the Judgment of the Great White Throne described in Revelation 20. There is great need in connection with this whole subject that we be "rightly dividing the word of truth."

Sifting Out the Rebels

Fifth. In the 20th chapter of Ezekiel the Judgment of the Nation of Israel is described. This Judgment will take place on Earth, in the wilderness of Judæa, after the Return of Christ in His glory, and will be for the purpose of sifting out the rebels against Jehovah and His rule. These will be kept from entering into the Land of Promise in connection with the setting up of the Kingdom of David. Let the members of the class study Ezekiel 20:33-44 and Psalm 50, for details concerning this Judgment.

Sixth. The Judgment of the *Lost Dead* will take place at the end of the Millennium. Its description is found in the twentieth chapter of The Revelation, verses 11-15. This scene will come before us later on in the series.

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Seventh. The Scriptures speak of a coming Judgment of *Angels*, though the time and place of this Judgment are not made known. Christians are to be associated with the Lord in this Judgment, as in some of the others. See I Corinthians 6:3; II Peter 2:4; Jude 6.

Let us now turn to the passage in which the Judgment of Believers' Works is taken up. It is the third chapter of I Corinthians, verses 11-15. The passage reads as follows:

For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, and stubble;

Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

It is perfectly clear that this Judgment has to do only with Christians, those who have the great Foundation Stone already laid. They have Christ and He is the Foundation. They build upon that Foundation.

And it is equally clear that in this Judgment the matter of our salvation does not come up at all. There are rewards for ac-

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ceptable service, and there is loss for failure in service, but even those who suffer loss are saved, though narrowly, nakedly, "so as by fire" (I Peter 4:17, 18). In this Judgment all the judged ones are saved, but not all are rewarded.

Paul had this scene in mind constantly. In II Corinthians 5:9, 10, he says:

We are ambitious, whether at home or absent, to be well-pleasing unto Him. For we must all be made manifest before the Judgment Seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (R. V. margin).

This quotation is from the Revision, and according to the marginal rendering in that Version. Paul's ambition was to be well-pleasing unto his Lord. The commendation of Christ was "the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" for which he ran in the race (Phil. 3:14). The disapproval of Christ was the thing he feared in I Corinthians 9:27. He had preached to others, and he did not want to be a castaway (*adokimos* =disapproved).

When God Will Find Something to Praise

It is in view of this coming Judgment of Believers' Works that Christians are so frequently exhorted not to judge one another:

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But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ (Rom. 14:10).

Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God (I Cor. 4:5).

"Praise of God!" Surely, that is reward enough for any one. How wonderful it is that He should ever praise us! And yet He will do so. He will find something in the work of even the smallest of His children that He may praise. The Revised Version reads, "and then shall each man have his praise from God." How good it will be to hear words of praise from His mouth!

This reward is reserved for us against the day of His coming. He says: "Behold, I come quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. 22:12).

Crowns are used in Scripture as symbols of rewards laid up for believers who earn them. There are five crowns thus offered:

1. The Crown of *Rejoicing*: the reward for faithfulness in ministry (I Thes. 2:19, 20; Phil. 4:1).

2. The Crown of *Righteousness*: the reward of faithfulness in testimony (II Tim. 4:8).

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3. The Crown of *Life*: the reward of faithfulness under trial. Note the distinction between *Life* and the *Crown* of Life. Life is salvation, and salvation is a gift. The crown is a reward, and a reward is earned by works (James 1:12; Rev. 2:10).

4. The Crown of *Glory*: the reward of faithfulness in suffering (I Peter 5:4; Heb. 2:9).

5. The Crown *Incorruptible*: the reward of faithfulness in the exercise of self-control in the race for Christ's approval (I Cor. 9:24-27).

To receive the Crown of Rejoicing from His pierced hand, or the Crown of Righteousness, or Glory, or Incorruption, will be blessed indeed. But still more blessed will be the privilege of casting all our crowns before Him Who alone is worthy. And thus it shall be:

And when the living creatures shall give glory and honor and thanks to Him that sitteth on the throne, to Him that liveth for ever and ever, the four and twenty elders, shall fall down before Him that sitteth on the throne, and shall worship Him that liveth for ever and ever, and shall cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

Worthy art Thou, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power: for Thou didst create all things, and because of Thy will they were, and were created (Rev. 4:9-11, R. V.).

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But for Him, there could be no crown for us. But for His Crown of Thorns, there could be nothing but death and dismay for us. And all this was planned in His love from before the foundation of the world. From the beginning, before the world was, we were in His thought, and in His heart, and in His plans. This was "the joy that was set before Him."

"From the palace of His glory,
From the radiance and the rest,
Came the Son of God to seek me,
Bear me home upon His breast.
Far away, undone, forsaken,
Not for Him my heart was sore;
But for need and bitter hunger—
Christ desired I nevermore.

"Could it be that in the glory,
Ere of Him I had a thought,
He was yearning o'er the lost one
Whom His precious blood had bought?
That it was His need that brought Him
Down to the accursed tree.
Deeper than His deep compassion,
Wondrous thought! His need of me?

"Trembling, I had hoped for mercy,
Some low place within His door—
But the crown, the throne, the mansion,
He made ready long before.
And in dim and distant ages,
In those courts so bright and fair,
Ere I was, was He rejoicing,
All He won with me to share."

The Amazing Final Seven Years

TRY to imagine the world without a single Christian in it!

Some day—and it might be any day—the town you now live in will find itself without any born-again people among its inhabitants, and so will all the towns and country districts around it. There will not be a child of God in the whole county, nor in the state, nor in the nation, nor in the whole world.

This is the next thing in the revealed program. One day, without further warning, “the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God,” and He will catch up unto Himself in the air all “the dead in Christ” and all the living who are in Christ. Every Christian will disappear from the world “in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye” at that “last trump”—the “trump of God.”

There will be professing Christians here, but that day will reveal the emptiness of their profession, and will leave them here to endure the horrors of the Great Tribulation. Upon such as have only “the form of godliness, . . . denying the power thereof,” that

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day shall come as a thief, bringing, not joy, but Judgment.

This catching away of the redeemed will be the first event in the amazing final seven years just preceding the Return to Earth of the Lord Jesus Christ "to judge and make war," and thus through Judgment to set up again the Throne of David and sit upon it as King of kings and Lord of lords.

"But," some one may ask, "why do you speak of *seven* years? Why the seven?"

When the Lord Reissued Gabriel's Order

The answer is found in connection with the ninth chapter of Daniel. In the final verses of this chapter the Angel Gabriel gives a revelation of great importance. Daniel had been praying for his people, and Gabriel had come from Heaven with God's response to the prayer. He said:

O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew thee; . . . therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision.

"Understand the matter." A similar command comes to us from our Lord, Who, referring to this very passage in Daniel, said, in Matthew 24:15, "Whoso readeth, let him understand." We ought, therefore, to give

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earnest heed to Gabriel's message. Hear Him. I quote from the American Standard edition of the Revised Version:

Seventy weeks are decreed upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy. Know therefore and discern, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Anointed One, the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: it shall be built again, with street and moat, even in troublous times. And after the threescore and two weeks shall the Anointed One be cut off, and shall have nothing: and the people of the Prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and even unto the end shall be war; desolations are determined. And He shall make a firm covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate; and even unto the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate.

This is the famous passage containing "Daniel's Seventy Weeks." This word translated "weeks" throughout the passage is simply the word "sevens." Not seven days, nor seven anything—just *sevens*. Whether days or months or years are meant must be determined by the context. And here the context will show us plainly that these weeks are weeks of years. Seventy sevens are

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marked out, which would be 490 years. During these 490 years six things were to be accomplished. And, mark, these six things had to do with Daniel's people and with his holy city—that is, the nation of Israel and the city of Jerusalem.

1. *"To finish transgression."* The marginal reading makes it "to restrain the transgression." The transgression of Israel is the rejection of the Messiah. In the day that was coming, and a day which was in mind in this communication to Daniel, that transgression would be restrained and come to an end. For in that day they will receive Him Whom they now reject. (Compare Isaiah 59: 20 with Romans 11:26.)

2. *"To make an end of sins."* The margin reads, "to seal up sins." The sins are those of Israel and Jerusalem. According to God's promise, they are to be ended. "This is my covenant unto them when I shall take away their sins." (Compare Isaiah 27:9 with Romans 11:27.)

3. *"To make reconciliation for iniquity,"* or, according to the marginal reading, "to purge away iniquity." Potentially, all this was accomplished by the Lord Jesus for His people when He hung on Calvary's cross, but of the coming day when His people shall

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look on Him Whom they have pierced it is written that then "there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness" (Zech. 13:1).

4. *"To bring in everlasting righteousness."* This surely points to the day of Israel's conversion as a nation. "And so all Israel shall be saved, as it is written" (Rom. 11:26). It is the fulfillment of the covenant, by which God has promised, saying:

Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a Husband unto them, saith Jehovah. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah: I will put My law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, "Know Jehovah; for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more" (Jer. 31:31-34).

No More Need for Visions!

5. *"To seal up vision and prophecy,"* or, "prophet" (marg). Visions and prophecies, or prophets, are necessary only when and

where sin abounds. With Israel and Jerusalem restored to perfect fellowship with God, with every individual in the nation knowing God, from the least of them to the greatest of them, the need for visions and prophecies will disappear. "Whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away" (I Cor. 13:8-10).

6. *"To anoint the most holy."* Consulting the margin again, we read here, "to anoint a most holy place." This, very likely, is a reference to the millennial temple, and the anointing of its holy of holies. This will be the great climax of all things for Israel and for Jerusalem. Daniel's people will in that day be a Kingdom of priests, and their holy city will become the political and spiritual center of the world, "the joy of the whole Earth." Then shall the promise of Isaiah 27:6 be fulfilled: "In days to come shall Jacob take root; Israel shall blossom and bud, and they shall fill the face of the world with fruit."

But how can all this be said to come to pass during the comparatively short space of 490 years? We shall see as to that.

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The 490-year period begins with "the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem." There is but one commandment on record that can be thus described. Cyrus and Darius issued decrees concerning the city and its temple, but the only "commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem" was that issued to Nehemiah by Artaxerxes Longimanus (Neh. 2:1-5). This is dated in the twentieth year of that Emperor's reign, and in the month Nisan, which is equivalent to March, 445, B. C.

We have another time note in the words, "unto the Anointed One [or Messiah] the Prince." From the commandment of 445 B. C. unto Messiah the Prince, was to be sixty-nine sevens, or four hundred and eighty-three years, made up of two parts. Seven sevens, or forty-nine years, were to be devoted to the rebuilding, in troublous times, of the city, with street and moated wall. Then after sixty-two more sevens, or four hundred and thirty-four years, there should come Messiah the Prince. Careful mathematicians have found that from the date of Artaxerxes' decree it was precisely four hundred and eighty-three prophetic years of three hundred and sixty days each to the day when Messiah rode into His capital as the

Prince of the House of David, offering Himself as King to His people.

A Parenthesis Between Times

This disposes of all but the final seven of years —“Daniel’s Seventieth Week.” According to the terms of the passage we are studying, this last week of years was not to follow immediately the close of the sixty-ninth week. Some things were to intervene between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks. The space between these two weeks of years is not defined: it might be short or long; but during this interim certain events must transpire.

First, Messiah the Anointed One (Christ) must be “cut off, and shall have nothing,” or, as the King James Version reads, “but not for Himself.” This was to be “after the threescore and two sevens”—that is, at the close of the second period. The first period was seven sevens, followed by the second period of sixty-two sevens, after which Messiah was to be cut off. This, of course, points to the crucifixion of Christ, just “after the threescore and two sevens” which brought us to the end of four hundred and eighty-three years, with the final seven not yet begun.

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Second, the destruction of Jerusalem is placed in this gap between the sixty-ninth and seventieth sevens. According to the prophecy, the city and its temple were to be destroyed by "the people of the Prince that shall come." This coming Prince cuts a large figure in the book of Daniel. He is the Beast of the end-time, the last great Gentile ruler, who shall be ruling the world in the power of Satan during the Great Tribulation. We shall see more of this terrible character as we go on with this series of studies. Now, as the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A. D. was by the Roman armies, we conclude that the coming Prince will be a Roman ruler. And, indeed, the testimony of Scripture is perfectly clear that the great Beast King will be the Emperor of the revived Roman Empire, which is to become again, as in olden times, the mistress of the world.

The Beast will come to his end "with a flood" of God's wrath and indignation. Meanwhile, the whole interval between the sixty-ninth and seventieth sevens is characterized by the closing words of verse 26: "Even unto the end shall be war: desolations are determined."

Then comes the final seven, in verse 27. From the New Testament we learn, as we

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have already seen, that this final seven of years will be ushered in by the Rapture of the redeemed. When they are caught up to meet the Lord in the air, the amazing final seven years will begin.

The first thing communicated to Daniel with reference to the final seven years is that the coming Prince will enter into a league with the people of Israel for the whole term of seven years. The language employed here seems to indicate that the treaty is ratified by a majority vote of the Jewish people. Literally, it is, "He shall make a firm covenant with the many for one seven." The covenant is probably in the nature of a protectorate, the Beast King undertaking to protect the people of Israel during a period of seven years. In such a case, as a matter of course, there would be a resumption of the ceremonies of Judaism. The mosque of Omar, now occupying the ancient temple site, would very likely be transformed into a temple for this purpose.

This goes on for three and a half years, when the treaty is repudiated, as "a scrap of paper," by the King, who, "in the midst of the seven," causes "the sacrifice and the oblation to cease." Instead of the worship of Jehovah, the worship of the Emperor

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himself as divine becomes the established religion, not only for the Jews, but also for the whole world. An image of the Beast is set up in the holy of holies in the temple at Jerusalem, and the whole world is called upon to worship the Beast and his image on pain of death. This is the climax of the Great Tribulation, which will come before us in detail later on in our studies. It is the "abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the Prophet," and referred to by our Lord in his Olivet Discourse.

The whole period of the final seven years is outlined in the Olivet Discourse, as well as in the book of The Revelation. It will be a time of false Christs, wars and rumors of wars, famine, pestilence, persecution, and suffering, such as the world has never known. As our Lord Himself describes it, "there shall be great tribulation, such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, nor ever shall be."

And, remember, all this lies just ahead, and may *at any moment* "begin to come to pass." No man can say that the catching away of the redeemed will take place on any given date, but it is equally true that no man can deny the possibility of its occurrence at any moment. In view of this fact, what manner of persons ought we to be?

The Beast King and the False Prophet

IN THE thirteenth chapter of The Revelation two terrible personages appear, in connection with the dreadful scenes of the End-Time. One is a King on the throne of universal empire, and the other is the head of a world-wide religious system under the sovereignty of the King. There is some confusion among Bible teachers and scholars as to the proper designation of these two characters. Some speak of them as "The Antichrist and the False Prophet," thus applying the term "Antichrist" to the King; others speak of them as "The King and the Antichrist," thus applying the term "Antichrist" to the False Prophet.

In the chapter itself the term "Antichrist" does not occur. The only use of the term anywhere in the Bible is by the writer of The Revelation, in the First and Second Epistles bearing his name. In I John 2:18-22 it is written:

Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now are there many Antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.

They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us [that none of them are of us].

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But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.

I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth.

Who is a liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is Antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.

Again in chapter 4:1-4, of the same Epistle, John writes:

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of Antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

And yet once more, in the 7th verse of his Second Epistle, the same writer says:

For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an Antichrist.

All this would indicate that, technically speaking, the term "Antichrist" belonged to the False Prophet rather than to the King.

But there is a strong parallelism between the Trinity of the Godhead on the one hand, and the Trinity of Evil presented in Revelation 13 on the other; and in this parallelism Satan appears as opposed to God the Father,

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Satan's King is arrayed against God's King, and Satan's False Prophet, testifying to the False King, is opposed to the Holy Spirit, who testifies to the True King. This alignment may seem to identify the King, rather than his False Prophet, as the Antichrist, since the meaning of the term is *against* or *opposed to* Christ, and this is the King's place in the Trinity of Evil.

There are two "Beasts," and they are both Antichristian. Yet the first "Beast" is set forth in the Scripture as distinctively and pre-eminently THE Beast. In Revelation 19:20 and 20:10 the two Beasts are referred to as "*the Beast and the False Prophet.*"

For the sake of simplicity and clearness in these studies we will drop from this point the term "Antichrist," and refer to these two characters as "The Beast King" and "The False Prophet."

The Beast King of the End-Time (Rev. 13:1-10)

And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a Beast rise up out of the sea (Rev. 13:1).

The beast is a familiar figure in the Bible, representing a political power. From comparison with the visions of Daniel, as we shall see a bit farther on, the conclusion is ir-

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resistible that this "Beast" is in type and symbol the revived Roman Empire. It rises "up out of the sea" of the Gentile nations (compare Rev 17:15, where the sea sign is employed and interpreted).

Having seven heads and ten horns (v. 1).

Seven is the number of completeness; here it speaks of universal power and dominion (see verse 7). The ten horns correspond with the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar's Dream Image and the ten horns of the fourth Beast in Daniel's vision described in his seventh chapter. Indeed, Daniel 7:7, 8 is another picture of the same thing that we are looking upon in Revelation 13:1, 2. The ten horns and the ten toes speak of the ten sub-divisions of the Roman Empire which will be confederated to make up the revived Empire.

And upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy (v. 1).

Ten kings, wearing crowns (Gr. diadems), join together in a League of Nations, under the sovereignty of the Emperor, and thus constitute the Empire, as shown by Daniel 7:24 and Revelation 17:12. The name (lit., names) of blasphemy are explained by the sixth verse of our chapter.

And the Beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion (v. 2).

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Turn now to the seventh chapter of Daniel, and read it through. The Beast out of the sea in Revelation 13:1, 2 is the same as the "dreadful and terrible" fourth Beast in Daniel 7:7, 8. Compare also Daniel 2:40-43. It is Rome. The world-monarchy preceding Rome was Greece, symbolized by the leopard of Daniel 7:6, as also by the rough goat of Daniel 8:5, which is identified in Daniel 8:21 as "the King [or Kingdom] of Grecia." Before Greece there was Medo-Persia, the bear kingdom of Daniel 7:5, seen also in the ram of Daniel 8:3-7 and named in Daniel 8:20. Before Medo-Persia was Babylon, the lion kingdom of Daniel 7:4. John tells us that the Beast out of the sea which he saw "was like unto a leopard," but with feet like a bear, and a mouth like a lion's mouth. That is to say, in the last great Gentile monarchy there will be the spirit of all the Gentile monarchies that have gone before it. Greece, Medo-Persia, and Babylon are headed up in this last great Empire. A beast is an apt symbol of them all. It is significant that a beast or bird of prey is the adopted symbol of all the nations of the Earth.

And the Dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority (v. 2).

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The Dragon is Satan himself (Rev. 20:2). He gives to this revived world Empire his own power. The word for "seat" is *thronos*, and is rightly changed by the Revisers to "throne." Satan is the Prince of this world, according to the testimony of our Lord Himself (John 12:31; 14:30). He is the "Prince of the Power of the Air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph. 2:2). He once offered "his power, and his throne, and great authority" to the Son of God, who refused his offer (Luke 4:5, 6). Here Satan finds a man—the superman for whom the world is looking—and to this superman Satan gives his throne and his power and his authority. The Lord Jesus spoke of this superman in John 5:43, when he said to the Jews: "I am come in My Father's name, and ye receive Me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive."

And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the Beast. And they worshipped the Dragon which gave power unto the Beast: and they worshipped the Beast, saying, Who is like unto the Beast? who is able to make war with Him? (vs. 3, 4).

It is easy to understand that such a mighty monarch would have the world at his feet. The world to-day is searching for a man who

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is able to still the seething cauldron of Europe, to say nothing of the restless nations outside of Europe. Should such a man arise—one powerful enough to subdue the nations, one against whom no one could successfully prosecute war, one so energized by super-human, supernatural power as to get into his hands the reins of international rulership—the world would go after him *en masse*. And if the world came to know that all this power, manifested in the man on the throne, was the power of Satan, the world would not be slow to worship “the Dragon which gave power unto the Beast.” It is but a step, essentially, from the rejection of the Son of God to the worship of Satan who is opposed to God. Farther on in this chapter we shall see how the worship of the Emperor is to become the state religion of the whole Earth in that dreadful day.

And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power [authority] was given unto him to continue forty and two months (v. 5).

Here we have a time-note that helps us to locate the manifestation and reign of the Beast-King. The forty-two months spoken of here are identical with the 1260 days of the ministry of the two witnesses from Heaven (Rev. 11:3); and with the “time,

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times and a half" of Daniel 12:7. The exact parallel is found in Daniel 7:25, where the same "Beast" is in view, and where it is written that he will "think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into His hand until a time and times and the dividing of time." In Daniel a "time" is a year, and these three and one-half years are the final years of "the times of the Gentiles" spoken of by our Lord in Luke 21:24. It is the time of The Great Tribulation, the latter half of the amazing final seven years, of which we recently studied together.

And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in Heaven (v. 6).

This terrible King, the Man of Sin and Son of Perdition, "opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." His "coming is after the power of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish" (II Thes. 2:3-10). Such is this blasphemer. And the Raptured Church, as well as God Himself, will be the object of his blasphemies. He will blaspheme "them that dwell in Heaven," and

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we shall by that time be included in that happy company.

And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power [authority] was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations (v. 7).

The "saints" here are the Jewish remnant of the End-Time, together with that innumerable company, out of all the nations, seen in the seventh chapter of The Revelation, who, refusing to worship the Beast King, shall die for the testimony of Jesus and for the Word of God. The Great Tribulation is to come before us in a later study in this series, and therefore we do not go into particulars here.

And all that dwell upon the Earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (v. 8).

What a time of testing and sifting that will be! It will avail nothing in that day merely to profess to know God. The form of godliness will not do. Blessed indeed—then as now—to have the assurance that one's name is "registered in Heaven" (Heb. 12:23).

If any man have an ear, let him hear (v. 9).

Oh, for the anointed ear, to enable us to hear the voice of the Spirit of God!

He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints (v. 10).

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A much abused and overworked verse! Taken from its context, and removed from its God-given place, it has been made to do duty many a time for the "pacifist" and the "conscientious objector." It belongs in the End-Time, and is an exhortation and warning directed to God's people of that time, to save them from resorting to force to establish their rights. Let them wait only on God, who will "avenge them speedily" (comp. Luke 18:8).

The False Prophet of the End-Time (vs. 11-18)

And I beheld another Beast coming up out of the Earth (v. 11).

The first Beast is a Gentile, rising out of the sea of the nations. The second Beast is an apostate Jew, coming out of the Earth. The Earth is suggestive of Israel, God's earthly people, with earthly promises and earthly destiny.

And he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon (v. 11).

It is characteristic of all false prophets to parade themselves as representatives of the Lamb, and then to teach and preach doctrines of Satan. "Try the spirits whether they are of God." Watch them. Look not upon their outward appearance. What do

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they say? How do they speak? Is their doctrine of God or of man? Here is a timely word, even for our day. "Despise not prophesyings," but "prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

And he exerciseth all the power [authority] of the first Beast before him, and causeth the Earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first Beast, whose deadly wound was healed (v. 12).

In the third verse we saw one of the Beast's heads as healed after a mortal wound. The Roman Empire has been reckoned dead by the world for centuries. It will be revived, and it will have a head, that is an Emperor. His pomp and power will amaze the world, and the world will be called upon to worship him.

And he doeth great wonders [signs], so that he maketh fire come down from Heaven on the Earth in the sight of men (v. 13).

"The Jews require a sign," and here is a sign for those who turn from God in that day of fiery trial. It is Elijah's chosen sign on Mount Carmel. It will deceive all but the very elect.

And deceiveth them that dwell on the Earth by the means of those miracles [signs] which he had power to do in the sight of the Beast; saying to them that dwell on the Earth, that they should make an image to the Beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live (v. 14).

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This is the third chapter of Daniel over again. Nebuchadnezzar was the first ruler in the period called the Times of the Gentiles; the Beast King of the End-Time will be the last ruler in that period. Both Nebuchadnezzar and the Beast King introduce universal idolatry as the state religion of the whole world, demanding worship of their own persons on pain of death for refusal.

And he had power to give life unto the image of the Beast, that the image of the Beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the Beast should be killed (v. 15).

The Revision corrects the word "life" to "breath." This image is the "abomination of desolation" spoken of by Daniel and by the Lord Jesus. It will be set up in the holy of holies of the Tribulation Temple at Jerusalem, displacing the ark of the covenant and the mercy-seat.

And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads (v. 16).

This mark of the Beast is the alternative in that day for those who refuse the seal of God (comp. chap. 7).

And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the Beast, or the number of his name (v. 17).

It is universal boycott. It means, worship the Emperor or starve. There is nothing

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new about it, except the world wide extent of it. The Roman Emperors in olden time often proclaimed themselves divine, and demanded and received divine honors; and woe to the man who in those days refused to bow the knee and burn incense to the Cæsars! Thus will it be again, but when it comes again it will reach out into the uttermost parts of the world.

Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the Beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred threescore and six (v. 18).

There are many pictures of this dreadful and terrible Beast King in the Word of God. Let my readers meditate prayerfully such passages as Daniel 8:23-25 and 11:36-45. We shall be studying them together when we take up the Great Tribulation. Meanwhile, observe that we have in this closing verse an exhortation to "count the number of the Beast." In Daniel 12:10, it is written that "the wise shall understand"; and here we read, "Let him that hath understanding count the number of the Beast."

And then it says: "*It is the number of man.*" What is man's number in the Scriptures? Those who have understanding tell us that man's number is *six*. Under the law, man's weekly labor was limited to six days,

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for God has so constituted man that he must rest after six days, or grow old before his time and break down. The seventh is God's day, and *seven* is the number of divine completeness throughout the Scriptures.

Man's number is *six*. The Beast King's number is a trinity of sixes—666.

Through the Beast King, Satan seeks to reproduce the works of God. He fails, because, after all, the Beast King is "a man, and not God," though he may set his heart as the heart of God, and claim to be God (Ezek. 28). The effort of the Trinity of Evil to imitate God's work results in failure. The register is never *seven*, but always *six*.

The number *six* was stamped upon the image of Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 3: it was *sixty* cubits high and *six* cubits broad; and its glory was heralded by a great band or orchestra in which *six* instruments are named. It was all of *man*, and *man's number* is seen upon it. In the image-worship of the End-Time *man's number* is fully developed, and the result is *six* and *six* and *six*—666.

The destiny of the Beast King and False Prophet is seen in Revelation 19:20 and 20:10. At the second coming of Christ to judgment they are cast alive into the Lake of Fire. At the end of the Millennium they are

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seen, still there and still alive, when Satan is cast in to join them, and there shall the three—the Trinity of Evil—“be tormented day and night for ever and ever.”

The Jews' Sensational Age-Ending

STEPPING off a train one day at a station in Maryland, my curiosity was arrested by a large basket of birds taken from the express car at that station. As the train pulled out, I observed the express agent and his helpers, as they took careful record of the time of day, and then opened the basket and released about fifty pigeons. The birds rose into the air perhaps a hundred feet, circled round and round for a few minutes, and then, as if by common consent, and without a leader so far as I could see, they all started in a straight line for home. The agent told me where they came from, naming a point in New Jersey exactly a hundred miles away. "How long will it take them to get home?" I asked.

The agent replied, "Oh, they will be there within three or four hours."

I went on my way with a renewed sense of the wonderful works of God. How any one can consider a homing pigeon without thinking of the God who made the homing pigeon is beyond my ken.

Israel is a nation of homing pigeons. And the day is coming when the world will be

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amazed by such a home-coming on the part of this nation as will compel the world to say, "This is the finger of God."

I have not gone far afield for my symbolism. In Isaiah 60:8, 9, the Spirit of Truth has employed the same figure:

Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?

Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of Jehovah thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because He hath glorified thee.

After the "Fishers" and the "Hunters"

The Exodus of Israel from Egypt was a marvelous event in the history of nations; but there is coming an Exodus which will throw that first Exodus into eclipse,—an Exodus of Israel out of all lands into their own land. In Jeremiah 16:14-16, it is written:

Therefore, behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that it shall no more be said, Jehovah liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;

But, Jehovah liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither He had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.

Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith Jehovah, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks.

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Almost exactly similar language is found in Jeremiah 23:7, 8, but there it is preceded, in verses 5 and 6, by a promise showing that this repatriation of Israel has a close relation to the return of Messiah to reign:

Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the Earth.

In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

In the 6th verse of Isaiah 27 there is a promise that God "shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit." In a later article in this series we are to consider the time "When the Jews Become Mankind's Glory." In the present study my task is to show from the Scriptures the circumstances of the End-Time, so far as the Jews are concerned.

The wholesale return of Jehovah's chosen people to their own land will be preceded by the return of a remnant in unbelief. I say "in unbelief," because only unbelievers would be so deceived by the Beast King as to make a treaty with him, as was brought out in the article, "The Beast King and the False Prophet," in last week's issue.

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Indeed, there is even now a remnant of unbelieving Jews in Palestine, and by the agreement of the nations they are to have a Jewish state there, subject to Gentile sovereignty. So the stage is already set for the scenes of the End-Time, to be enacted after the Church has been caught away to meet her Lord.

During the seven years' absence of the Church from the Earth, this unbelieving remnant will turn to the Lord, together with a remnant of Jews throughout the world; and these will be the evangelists of the End-Time, witnessing to the Gentiles of the approaching Kingdom in the person of the King who is about to come "in the clouds of Heaven, with power and great glory." This preaching will be in fulfillment of our Lord's words in Matthew 24:14,—

And this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

It is not "the Gospel of the Kingdom" that is committed to the church to preach, but the Gospel of the grace of God. The Kingdom of Heaven is not now at hand. The Lord is at hand. The Gospel we preach is the good news of the death and resurrection, in our be-

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half, of Him who was delivered up for our offenses and raised again for our justification. But in the time of the Great Tribulation the Jewish evangelists will have to testify to the coming Kingdom, and then—when the testimony has reached all nations—then shall the end come.

The end spoken of is the end of the Jewish age, interrupted by the coming in of the church, and programmed to run its course for another week of years after the church is completed and caught away to meet the Lord in the air.

At the end of the seven years, the final “week” of Daniel’s seventy, the Second coming of Christ to the Earth will take place.

Behold He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the Earth shall wail because of Him (Rev. 1:7).

For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be...

Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from Heaven, and the powers of the Heavens shall be shaken.

And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in Heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the Earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory (Matt. 24:27-30).

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The Greater Exodus

Then will come the greater Exodus of Israel. Our Lord speaks of it in the verse following those just quoted:

And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of Heaven to the other (Matt. 24:31).

The "elect" in this Scripture is Israel. Their gathering is often the theme of the Old Testament prophets.

For Jehovah will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob (Isa. 14:1).

And it shall come to pass in that day, that Jehovah shall beat off from the channel of the river unto the stream of Egypt, and ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel.

And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship Jehovah in the holy mount at Jerusalem (Isa. 27:12,13).

The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.

And the ransomed of Jehovah shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away (Isa. 35:1, 10).

Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west;

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I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the Earth (Isa. 43:5, 6).

Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders (Isa. 49:22).

One of the most striking passages on the subject is in Isaiah 66:18-20:

It shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues: and they [the nations] shall come and see my glory.

And I will set a sign among them [Israel], and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal, and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare My glory among the Gentiles.

And they [the Gentiles] shall bring all your brethren [Israelites] for an offering unto Jehovah out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith Jehovah, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of Jehovah.

The Time of the New Covenant

Quotations have been made from Isaiah and Jeremiah. Let us now look at the prophecy of Ezekiel, which abounds in testimony touching our subject. In chapter 34, which is almost wholly devoted to denunciation of the false shepherds of Israel, it is written in the 12th and 13th verses:

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As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.

And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country.

Again in Ezekiel 36:24, we read:

For I will take you from among the nations, and gather you out of all the countries, and will bring you into your own land.

When Israel is thus restored to the land of promise, the whole nation will be turned to the Lord:

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments, and do them.

And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be My people, and I will be your God (Ezek. 36:25-28).

That will be the time of the New Covenant with Judah and Israel, when, according to Jeremiah 31:31-34, no one in all the nation shall say to his neighbor or brother, Know Jehovah, for they shall all know Him, from the least to the greatest.

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To go on with Ezekiel: The famous vision of the Valley of Dry Bones, in chapter 37, is a picture in detail of Israel's regathering unto the land, and their conversion to God. This chapter will come before us in a later article, but the student will do well to read it in connection with the present study. There is no need of misunderstanding its meaning, for the whole matter is carefully explained in the chapter itself.

Israel's regathering is delayed "until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in," or until the church is completed and taken up to meet the Lord; meanwhile, the nation is blinded (Rom. 11:25-27). The blindness is not complete, for some Jews are being saved even now, a remnant according to the election of grace (Rom. 11:5). Neither is it final; as we have already seen, it is only *until* the present outgathering work is finished.

The 39th chapter of Ezekiel, in its closing paragraph, has the matter stated clearly:

Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah; Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, and will be jealous for My holy name;

After that they have borne their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against Me, when they dwelt safely in their land, and none made them afraid.

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When I have brought them again from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations;

Then shall they know that I am Jehovah their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the nations: but I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there.

Neither will I hide My face any more from them: for I have poured out My Spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord Jehovah.

All this is to be accomplished for them only "after they have borne their shame." They are a greatly humiliated and afflicted people. But this will not be for ever. Hear the word of Jehovah through the prophet Zephaniah:

Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem.

Jehovah hath taken away thy judgments, He hath cast out thine enemy: the King of Israel, even Jehovah, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more.

In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not: and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack.

Jehovah thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; He will save; He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in his love, He will joy over thee with singing....

At that time will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you: for I will make you a name and a praise among all peoples of the Earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith Jehovah (Zeph. 3:14-20).

No one will attempt to maintain that all these wonderful predictions were fulfilled in

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the return of a pitiable remnant of Israel in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah. No; the promises are too big for that. The Lord Jehovah has said to the mountains of Israel that He will multiply men upon them, "all the house of Israel, even all of it" (Ezek. 36:10); and he has also promised that when Israel is finally restored to the land, it will not be for a temporary stay there: through his servant Amos he says:

I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith Jehovah thy God (Amos 9:15).

Did you notice, as we read the 60th chapter of Isaiah, that when the Jews move back home they will take with them their money? Read it again, and observe the 8th verse: "their silver and their gold with them." What will "little old New York" do then, with all its Jewish bankers and merchants missing, together with their silver and their gold?

The day is coming when the financial center of the world will be no longer in New York, nor in London, but in Jerusalem, the political and spiritual capital of Worldwide Empire, the City of the Great King, the Joy of the Whole Earth.

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And in that day the Jew will come into his own. No longer dispersed among the nations, no longer despised of all men, but exalted to become a Kingdom of priests, "the head, and not the tail" (Deut. 28:13).

And it shall come to pass that, as ye were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing. Fear not, but let your hands be strong.... Thus saith Jehovah of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold, out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you (Zech. 8:13, 23).

"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem."

Why Only One Great Tribulation?

TRIBULATION is the appointed portion of God's people in every age. Our Lord says, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

And oftentimes the tribulation through which God's people must pass is very great. Paul went everywhere, in his missionary journeys, "confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through *much* tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22).

The benefit of tribulation for the people of God is often insisted upon in the Scriptures. For example, it is written in Romans 5:3, "We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience."

In II Corinthians 1:3, 4, Paul showed that his own tribulations, and the comfort he received from God in connection with them, were for the purpose of fitting him for a ministry of comfort to others. And again, in the same letter, chapter 7, verse 4, he writes:

Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my glorying of you: I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.

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Upon learning, through Timothy, of the sufferings through which the Christians of Thessalonica were passing, he wrote:

That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto. For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know (I Thes. 3:3, 4).

The Tribulation that is Different

From Patmos, John the Revelator, writing to the seven churches of Asia, signs himself as "your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the Kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 1:9). And to the church in Smyrna the same writer says:

I know thy works, and tribulation and poverty, (but thou art rich)...Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the Devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life (Rev. 2:9, 10).

All this is true, and yet all this has no reference whatever to what is called in the Bible "The Great Tribulation." This is yet future, such a time of suffering as this poor old Earth has never seen in all its history, and such—thank God!—as it will never see again. What saith the Scripture?

In the Second Psalm the Holy Spirit points to a time when the voice of God shall be

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heard in judgment against His enemies, who have taken counsel together against Jehovah and against His Anointed (Messiah-Christ), saying, "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." It is a Declaration of Independence against the God of Heaven. Then we read:

He that sitteth in the Heavens shall laugh:
the Lord shall have them in derision.

Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath,
and vex them in His sore displeasure.

The burden of His message, when He shall speak in wrath, is seen in the next verse, the 6th:

Yet have I set My king upon My holy hill of Zion.

This is what the Lord's enemies would hinder, and precisely this is what the Lord proposes to do, when the fulness of time shall come.

What an awful thing to contemplate! Think of the God of all grace, the "very God of peace," speaking to the world in His wrath! So long has He spoken in grace, and drawn men by the cords of love, that to speak in wrath will be indeed His strange work.

The church of Christ will not be subjected to that dreadful visitation of God's wrath, for she has put her trust in the Son of God, "whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus,

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which delivered us from the wrath to come" (I Thes. 1:9, 10).

For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him (I Thes. 5:9, 10).

Those who teach that the church must pass through the Great Tribulation are forgetting that in the person of her Substitute she has already endured the wrath of God, having been in Christ on the cross when all the waves and billows passed over Him (Psalm 42:7). It is unthinkable that the Church, now reconciled to God, and the bride of Christ, should again be subjected to the horrors of "the wrath to come." Indeed, the promise is written large, in the message to the church in Philadelphia:

Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation [trial], which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the Earth (Rev. 3:10).

Of course, it must be understood that by "the church" here is meant "the church which is His body," the born-again ones. No one else is included in the true church, the real church of Christ.

In the thirtieth chapter of Jeremiah we may find a key passage touching our subject,

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showing that, although the sufferings of the Great Tribulation will involve the whole Earth (and this will be shown later in this article), yet the Jews will be the chief sufferers in that awful time. Observe also that the Great Tribulation has some connection with the return of Israel to the Holy Land, of which we studied in our last article:

The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying,

Thus speaketh the Lord God of Israel, saying, Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book.

For, lo, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the Lord: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it.

And these are the words that the Lord spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah.

For thus saith the Lord: We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace.

Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness?

Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it.

The Time Without a Precedent

The language here, "that day is great, so that none is like it," finds almost exact counterpart in Daniel 12:1:

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And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great Prince which standeth for the children of thy people [that is, Israel]: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered every one that shall be found written in the book.

Also, in our Lord's words, in the Olivet Discourse:

When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

Then let them which be in Judæa flee into the mountains....

For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened (Matt. 24: 15-22).

For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be (Mark 13:19).

By far the most important passage in connection with the Great Tribulation is in the seventh chapter of the Revelation. In the opening verses of the chapter we see the sealed remnant out of Israel, numbering 12,000 in each tribe, or 144,000 in all. Then beginning at verse 9, John writes:

After this I beheld, and, lo a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

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And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb....

And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest.

The King James translation of the remainder of verse 14 is most unfortunate, for, by omitting the article before "great," the whole point of the passage is lost. The Revised Version has it:

And he said unto me, **These are they that** come out of the Great Tribulation, and they washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God; and they serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall spread His tabernacle over them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun strike upon them, nor any heat: for the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life: and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes.

The Greek in verse 14, is very emphatic. Literally, it reads: "These are they that come out of the *Tribulation, the Great One.*" Such an expression is not to be found elsewhere in the Bible.

Thus bringing together our material, we may now draw our conclusions with reference to the Great Tribulation. The details of that terrible period are found in chapters

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6 to 18 of the Revelation. Some of its features have already come before us in this series of studies, and will come before us again as we go on.

The Storm Center

The Great Tribulation will be a time of unprecedented and unparalleled suffering, covering the whole Earth, but centering in Jerusalem and upon the land and people of Israel. It will occupy the latter half of Daniel's Seventieth Week, lasting three and a half years. Its immediate occasion will be the violation of the covenant between the Beast King and the people of Israel, and the substitution of man-worship for the worship of God in the temple at Jerusalem as well as over the whole Earth. The terrible seal, and trumpet, and vial or bowl judgments will be poured upon the Earth during this period. The cruelties of the reign of the Beast have already been seen in a former study. In that day men must choose between the seal of God and the mark of the Beast. Under the fifth and sixth trumpets an army of two hundred million demons is released from the underworld "to slay the third part of men" (Rev. 9:3, 15-19).

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It is during the Great Tribulation that the two witnesses from Heaven—Elijah and another—will give their testimony in the streets of Jerusalem, be killed by their enemies, raised from the dead and caught up into Heaven (Rev. 11). It is during this Seventieth Week of Daniel that Satan and his angels are cast out of Heaven to the Earth, “having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time” (Rev. 12).

The 15th and 16th chapters of the Revelation give an account of the “seven plagues, which are the last, for in them is finished the wrath of God” (15:1).

First, there comes “a noisome and grievous sore” upon the worshippers of the Beast King (16:2).

Second, the sea becomes “as the blood of a dead man,” causing the death of every creature therein (verse 3).

Third, the rivers and springs are turned into blood (vs. 4-7).

Fourth, the heat of the sun is so intensified as to “scorch men with fire” (vs. 8, 9).

Fifth, the throne of the Beast King is directly attacked, filling the kingdom with darkness, until men gnaw their tongues for pain (v. 11).

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Sixth, the river Euphrates is dried up, "that the way of the Kings of the East might be prepared," for by this time the scene is to be set for the Battle of Armageddon (vs. 12-16).

Seventh, the Earth is torn by

voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the Earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And there fell upon men a great hail out of Heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent [about 100 pounds]: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great (vs. 17-21).

"Babylon" here evidently stands for the whole fabric of Gentile government, which began with Babylon in the days of Nebuchadnezzar and is characterized by Babylon to the end. Revelation 16:19 is parallel with Daniel 2:34, 35, 44, 45.

"Babylon, 'confusion,'" says the Scofield Reference Bible, "is repeatedly used by the Prophets in a symbolic sense. Two 'Babylons' are to be distinguished in the Revelation: ecclesiastical Babylon, which is apostate Christendom, headed up under the Papacy; and political Babylon, which is the

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Beast's confederated Empire, the last form of Gentile world-dominion. Ecclesiastical Babylon is 'the great whore' (Rev. 17:1), and is destroyed by political Babylon (Rev. 17:15-18), that the Beast may be the alone object of worship (II Thes. 2:3, 4; Rev. 13:15). The power of political Babylon is destroyed by the Return of the Lord in glory. The notion of a literal Babylon to be rebuilt on the site of ancient Babylon is in conflict with Isaiah 13:19-22. But the language of Revelation 18 (for example, verses 10, 16, 18) seems beyond question to identify 'Babylon,' the 'city' of luxury and traffic, with 'Babylon,' the ecclesiastical center, namely, Rome. The very kings who hate ecclesiastical Babylon deplore the destruction of commercial Babylon."

The Great Tribulation ends with the Battle of Armageddon, which will be the subject of our next study.

Armageddon—When It Comes

ARMAGEDDON, or Har-Magedon, is the name of a small mountain or hill in the plain of Jezreel west of the river Jordan. The meaning of the name is "the Hill of Megiddo." But "Megiddo" is a word meaning *slaughter*, and therefore "Armageddon" may be and has been translated, "the Mount of Slaughter."

In the eternal counsels of God this place, Armageddon, has been predetermined as the future scene of the most awful battle in the world's history. In the Word of God this battle is called "the battle of that Great Day of God Almighty."

The great battle will take place in connection with the second coming of our Lord to the Earth. This is not His coming *for* His saints, to catch them to meet Him in the air; but His coming *with* His saints, at the end of the Great Tribulation, "when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power" (II Thes. 1: 7-9).

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It is the fulfillment of the Smiting Stone prophecy of the second chapter of Daniel.

Under the sixth vial, as described in the sixteenth chapter of the Revelation, the water of the great river Euphrates is dried up, "that the way of the Kings of the East might be prepared" (verse 12). Then John writes:

And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the Dragon, and out of the mouth of the Beast, and out of the mouth of the False Prophet.

For they are the spirits of demons, working miracles, which go forth unto the Kings of the Earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the Battle of that Great Day of God Almighty.

Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

Islands in Flight as Men and Demons Rebel

Then there follows the awful destruction of the seventh vial:

And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of Heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.

And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the Earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.

And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath.

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Babylon here stands for Gentile world-sovereignty, and her destruction speaks of the end of the Times of the Gentiles, which began with Babylon in the days of Nebuchadnezzar. Let us read on:

And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

And there fell upon men a great hail out of Heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent [about one hundred pounds]: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

Because Satan and his angels are unseen by us, we are apt to ignore them and even forget that they exist. But God's Word shows that Satan is the Prince of this World, and that the whole world lieth in him (John 12:31; 14:30; 1 John 5:19, R. V.). As "Prince of the Power of the Air," Satan is at the head of vast numbers of demons, through whom the present world-system is ruled, always subject, however, to the restraining power of the Holy Spirit of God (Eph. 2:2; II Thes. 2:7, 8, R. V.). In the day of slaughter at Armageddon God will deal not only with men, but also with Satan and his angels:

It shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high one that are on high, and the Kings of the Earth upon the Earth (Isa. 24:21).

ARMAGEDDON—WHEN IT COMES

God's own people, who shall have turned to Him during the Great Tribulation and are waiting for the Lord's appearing at the end of that dreadful time, will be protected by His own power from the destruction that shall overtake His enemies. Is is written:

Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.

For, behold, the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the Earth for their iniquity: the Earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.

In that day the Lord with His sore and great and strong sword shall punish Leviathan the piercing serpent, even Leviathan that crooked serpent; and He shall slay the Dragon that is in the sea (Isa. 26:20 to 27:1).

The "indigation" referred to in this Scripture is explained in the thirty-fourth chapter of Isaiah:

Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people: let the Earth hear, and all that is therein: the world, and all things that come forth of it.

For the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, and His fury upon all their armies: He hath utterly destroyed them, He hath delivered them to the slaughter.

Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcasses, and the mountain shall be melted with their blood.

And all the host of Heaven shall be dissolved, and the Heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree.

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For my sword shall be bathed in Heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea [Edom], and upon the people of my curse, to judgment...

For it is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion.

The Lord Jesus is pictured in the sixty-third chapter of Isaiah as He shall in that day avenge His elect in taking vengeance upon their enemies, and His:

Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in His apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.

Wherefore art Thou red in Thine apparel, and Thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?

I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with Me: for I will tread them in Mine anger, and trample them in My fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon My garments, and I will stain all My raiment.

For the day of vengeance is in Mine heart, and the year of My redeemed is come.

And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore Mine own arm brought salvation unto Me; and My fury, it upheld Me.

And I will tread down the people in Mine anger, and make them drunk in My fury, and I will bring down their strength to the Earth.

When an Angry God Treads the Grapes

A similar word is also found in Isaiah 66: 15, 16:

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For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with His chariots like a whirlwind, to render His anger with fury, and His rebuke with flames of fire.

For by fire and by His sword will the Lord plead with all flesh: and the slain of the Lord shall be many.

The slaughter of Jehovah's enemies in that awful time shall by no means be confined to the plain of Jezreel, or even to the land of Palestine. See what is written in the twenty-fifth chapter of Jeremiah, beginning with the fifteenth verse:

For thus saith the Lord God of Israel unto me; Take the wine cup of this fury at My hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it.

And they shall drink, and be moved, and be mad, because of the sword that I will send among them.

Then took I the cup at the Lord's hand, and made all the nations to drink, unto whom the Lord had sent me:

To wit,...all the kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of the Earth:...

Therefore thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Drink ye, and be drunken, and spue, and fall, and rise no more, because of the sword which I will send among you.

And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup at thine hand to drink, then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Ye shall certainly drink.

For, lo, I begin to bring evil on the city which is called by My name, and shall ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished: for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the Earth, saith the Lord of hosts.

ARMAGEDDON—WHEN IT COMES

Therefore prophesy thou against them all these words, and say unto them, The Lord shall roar from on high, and utter His voice from His holy habitation; He shall mightily roar upon His habitation; He shall give a shout, as they that tread the grapes, against all the inhabitants of the Earth.

A noise shall come even to the ends of the Earth; for the Lord hath a controversy with the nations, He will plead with all flesh; He will give them that are wicked to the sword, saith the Lord.

Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the Earth.

And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the Earth even unto the other end of the Earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground.

The thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth chapters of Ezekiel seem to have Armageddon in view, and also that other somewhat similar battle that shall take place upon Satan's temporary release at the close of the Millennium. A graphic portrayal of Armageddon is in the third chapter of Joel, beginning with the ninth verse:

Proclaim ye this among the nations; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up:

Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong.

Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye nations, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord.

The Armageddon Battle Array

Here we have the battle array. The nations of the Earth are to be there in their armies, headed by the Dragon, the Beast, and the False Prophet. These are all on one side. And on the other side are the armies of Heaven, come down to Earth: "Thither cause Thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord!" Now, read on:

Let the nations be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the nations round about.

Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great.

Then look at this word of Jehovah through the prophet Obidah:

For the Day of the Lord is near upon all the nations: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head.

For as ye have drunk upon My holy mountain, so shall all the nations drink continually, yea, they shall drink, and they shall swallow down, and they shall be as though they had not been (vs. 15, 16).

Also, this, in Zephaniah 3:8:

Therefore wait ye upon Me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for My determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the Kingdoms, to pour upon them Mine indignation, even all My fierce anger: for all the Earth shall be devoured with the fire of My jealousy.

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The twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of Zechariah constitute a single strain of predictive testimony, dealing with the events connected with the Second Coming to Earth of the Son of Man to judge His enemies and establish His kingdom. The whole is summarized in the fourteenth chapter, already referred to frequently in our studies. First, in verses 1 and 2, we see the gathering of the nations against Jerusalem to battle, with the result that the city is taken by the besiegers and everything seems to be lost.

But in verse 3 the Lord Himself comes out of Heaven to reinforce His suffering people:

Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle.

Following this, in the verses beginning with the fourth, we are told of the precise point to which our Lord shall come, and of the wonderful physical changes wrought in the land itself by His power:

And His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south....

And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them to-

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ward the former sea [the Mediterranean], and half of them toward the hinder sea [the Dead sea]: in summer and in winter shall it be.

Then the throne of David is reestablished, with the promised Seed occupying it (verse 9):

And the Lord shall be king over all the Earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and His name one.

In verses 12 to 15 the Spirit of Truth gives us a description of the awful destruction that will come upon the allied armies of the nations fighting against the Lord and His people:

And this shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth.

And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from the Lord shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour....

And so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in these tents, as this plague.

In that dreadful day it will not be possible for any enemy of the Lord to escape judgment, for they will be hunted out as surely as the scavengers of the air hunt out the hidden carrion:

ARMAGEDDON—WHEN IT COMES

For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together (Matt. 24:27,28; compare Job 39:30).

These are the words of the Son of Man Himself. Their unfolding is in the nineteenth chapter of the Revelation. His coming "as the lightning" is described in detail in verses 11 to 16 of that chapter, in which He is seen at the head of the Heavenly armies, all "upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." He comes to judge and make war.

And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron: and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He hath on his vesture and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

Then our Lord's reference to the carcase and the eagles is made clear by what follows, in verses 17 to 21:

And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of Heaven, Come and gather yourself together unto the great supper of God [see R. V.]:

That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.

ARMAGEDDON—WHEN IT COMES

And I saw the Beast, and the Kings of the Earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the horse, and against His army.

And the Beast was taken, and with him the False Prophet... These both were cast alive into a Lake of Fire burning with brimstone.

And the remnant were slain with the sword of Him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of His mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.

Judgment is God's strange work. He loves to be gracious, and His arms are outstretched to welcome whosoever will come to Him through the blood-sprinkled Way—even by Him who said, "I am the Way." But for those who will not come unto Him that they might have life, there is nothing left but righteous judgment. A righteous God is of necessity shut up to this alternative.

"Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him."

Christ's Earth-Convulsing Return

ETERNAL review is the price of knowledge.

It would not be desirable, even if it were possible, in a series of studies such as this, to avoid overlapping. We must go over the same ground frequently. The great events connected with the End of the Age cannot be entirely separated in our minds, and they are not entirely separated in Scripture. The Great Tribulation, for example, leads up to, and even includes Armageddon; and Armageddon culminates in Christ's Earth-Convulsing Return. All this is as it should be: we shall lose nothing, but gain much, by this overlapping.

As we closed our study of Armageddon we were looking upon the majestic scenes of the nineteenth chapter of the Revelation. In verses eleven to sixteen of that chapter the Lord Jesus Christ is seen, as He is leaving Heaven, with His saints and angels, for the purpose of destroying His enemies and setting up the Kingdom of Heaven on the Earth:

And I saw Heaven opened, and beheld a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war.

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His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns; and He had a name written, that no man knew, but He Himself.

And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and His name is called The Word of God.

And the armies which were in Heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron: and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

And He hath on his vesture and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

That "Rod of Iron" Reign

Some of the language in this paragraph reminds us at once of the Second Psalm, where the Son of God says.

I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto Me, Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee.

Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the nations for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the Earth for Thy possession.

Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

The Speaker in the Psalm is also seen in Revelation 12:5, coming forth out of Israel, "a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod iron."

As He comes out of Heaven at the head of His armies, He brings with Him His co-

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rulers, in fulfillment of the promise of Revelation 2:26, 27:

And he that overcometh, and keepeth My works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations,

And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of My Father.

In many Scriptures the glorious Return of our Lord is referred to in glowing terms; and sometimes it is dwelt upon in detail. In the present study we shall look at some of these passages. Let us begin with the Fiftieth Psalm:

The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken, and called the Earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof.

Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.

Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him.

He shall call to the Heavens from above, and to the Earth, that He may judge His people.

Gather my saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice.

And the Heavens shall declare His righteousness: for God is Judge Himself. Selah.

“What a gathering that will be!” He calls them from the Heavens and from the Earth, even all His saints; those that have made a covenant with Him by sacrifice. This will be “when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe” (II Thes. 1:10). When He

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Who is their life shall appear, then shall they "also appear with Him in glory" (Col. 3:4).

The vision given to Daniel, and recorded by him in his seventh chapter, has this striking language:

I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool: His throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire....

I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of Heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him.

And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a Kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed....

And the Kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the Kingdom under the whole Heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.

The prophet Zechariah is God's mouth-piece for many messages concerning the coming glory. I quote once only from him in the present study—verses 10-13 of the second chapter:

Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord.

And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be My people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent Me unto thee.

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And the Lord shall inherit Judah His portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again.

Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord: for He is raised up out of His holy habitation.

Will the World Welcome Him?

It is not a converted world that will greet the Lord Jesus at His Second Coming. His own words, recorded in the synoptic Gospels, show that the world will not be glad to see Him. Let us look again at His Olivet Discourse:

For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be....

Immediately after the Tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from Heaven, and the powers of the Heavens shall be shaken:

And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in Heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the Earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory....

But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be.

For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,

And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be (Matt. 24:27-39).

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See also Luke 17:28-30, and then this:

And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the Earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring;

Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the Earth: for the powers of Heaven shall be shaken.

And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory (Luke 21:25-27).

The "Day of the Lord" is introduced by "Christ's Earth-Convulsing Return." The Day of the Lord, or of Jehovah, is a lengthened period beginning with the Second Coming of Christ to the Earth and going on through the Millennium itself, finally culminating in the Day of God at the close of the Kingdom age. It is very frequently referred to by the Prophets, and sometimes called merely "that day," or "the great day." We are now living in man's day, with man on trial and probation; but man's day will be succeeded by the Day of the Lord, which shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low...And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. And the idols he shall utterly abolish. And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the Earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of His majesty, when He ariseth to shake terribly the Earth. In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold,

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which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats; to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of His majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the Earth (Isa 2:12-21).

Behold the Day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and He shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it.

For the stars of Heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.

And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.

I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir.

Therefore I will shake the Heavens, and the Earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of His fierce anger (Isa. 13:9-13).

Alas for the day! for the Day of the Lord is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come (Joel 1:15).

Woe unto you that desire the Day of the Lord! to what end is it for you? the Day of the Lord is darkness, and not light.

As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him.

Shall not the Day of the Lord be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it (Amos 5:18-20).

And so on. We have already looked several times on that very important section of Scripture including the twelfth, thirteenth,

and fourteenth chapters of Zechariah, and in it we have seen that it is the Day of the Lord that terminates the Great Tribulation, the Battle of Armageddon, and the Times of the Gentiles, and brings in the Second Advent of the Messiah in connection with the great siege of Jerusalem by the armies of all nations. See especially Zechariah 14:1-3. It is here that we see the Mount of Olives dividing under Messiah's feet and the land in the vicinity of Jerusalem reduced to a plain.

All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the King's winepresses. And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited (14:10, 11).

Jerusalem is not a seaport, and it is an unheard of thing for an interior city to become a great metropolis. Jerusalem must be made a seaport, for Jerusalem is to be the political, and commercial, and religious capital and center of the universal Empire. That will be the time when "the Lord shall be King over all the Earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and His name one" (Zech. 14:9).

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How Jerusalem is to Become a Seaport!

The great physical changes which will be wrought in the region surrounding Jerusalem will make that city a seaport, with an immense harbor connecting the city with the Mediterranean sea. The great and mysterious basin of the Dead Sea will be filled up to constitute a part of that harbor. The Dead Sea is now over one thousand two hundred feet below the level of the Mediterranean, though it is only fifty miles distant from it. Jerusalem is between the two bodies of water.

And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea [that is, the sea before, or in front of, the city, meaning the Mediterranean], and half of them toward the hinder sea [that is, the sea behind the city, meaning the Dead Sea]: in summer and in winter shall it be (Zech. 14:8).

This mighty river is described in much detail in the forty-seventh chapter of Ezekiel:

Afterward he brought me again unto the door of the house; and, behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward: for the forefront of the house stood toward the east,¹ and the waters came down from

¹ The "house" in this Scripture is the Millennial Temple. It will face the east, looking toward the present location of "the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east." This mount will be split in two in order to make room for the great river to spring forth from Jerusalem as the result of the great topographical changes to accompany Christ's Earth-Convulsing Return.

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under from the right side of the house, at the south side of the altar.

Then brought he me out of the way of the gate northward, and led me about the way without unto the utter gate by the way that looketh eastward; and, behold, there ran out waters on the right side.

And when the man that had the line in his hand went forth eastward, he measured a thousand cubits,¹ and he brought me through the waters; the waters were to the ankles.

Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through the waters; the waters were to the knees. Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through; the waters were to the loins.

Afterward he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not pass over: for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over....

Then said he unto me, These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed....

And it shall come to pass, that the fishers shall stand upon it from En-gedi even unto En-eglaim²; they shall be a place to spread forth nets; their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea [i. e., the Mediterranean], exceeding many.

But the miry places thereof and the marishes thereof shall not be healed; they shall be given to salt.

¹ I am not unaware of the general "spiritualizing" of this passage, but all such efforts fail to throw light upon it. We are here looking upon a real river that shall one day flow out from Jerusalem, the mightiest river the world has ever known, upon whose bosom the combined fleets of all nations may ride in safety. Counting 18 inches to the cubit, Ezekiel and his Heavenly guide waded over a mile into the river before reaching water too deep for wading, and then found "waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over." This will serve to show what a tremendous body of water this river will be.

² These are points on the opposite side of the Dead Sea.

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From all of which it is plain that the Dead Sea basin is to become a great landlocked harbor, connected with the Mediterranean Sea by a great river springing forth from Jerusalem, in the day when Jerusalem shall be the City of the Great King, the joy of the whole Earth. The Dead Sea is now indeed a place of death, but in the coming day it will be a place of life, for its waters shall be healed by the waters from the river.

And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine (verse 12).

There is great similarity between the restored Earthly Jerusalem and the Heavenly Jerusalem, the house of the bride, the Lamb's wife. The Earthly city is made after the Heavenly pattern. Revelation 22:1, 2 also tells of a "pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." Yet the two cities are not identical. The city described in Ezekiel is the Earthly Jerusalem as she shall appear when the throne of David is re-established there and occupied by the promised Heir, the Son of David, the Son of God,

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which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting (I Tim. 6:15,16).

“Our God shall come.” We may hold to that, and depend upon that, and rest in that, for “the mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken.” Therefore, “Let the Heavens rejoice, and let the Earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord: for He cometh, for He cometh to judge the Earth: He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with His truth.”

How Will Christ Judge the Nations?

“GOD...now commandeth all men everywhere to repent: because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised him from the dead.” Thus spoke the Apostle to the Gentiles in his first proclamation of the Gospel in the great Gentile city of Athens (Acts 17:30, 31).

This word concerning judgment may include, at least in principle, *all* judgment. The whole world, embracing all human beings who ever have lived and all who ever shall live, must sooner or later face the Son of God in judgment, excepting only those who have taken their place under the sheltering blood of the covenant. These have already passed out of death into life, and shall not come into judgment (John 5:24). For the rest, since they have persisted in turning from God’s offered salvation in grace, nothing remains “but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries” (Heb. 10:27).

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What About the Heathen?

If some one asks how this affects the case of the heathen world which has not heard the Gospel, the answer is that "they are without excuse" who refuse to worship God (Rom. 1:20). The Judge of all the Earth knows how to do right (Gen. 18:25), and He knows how to measure responsibility. We may therefore — as indeed we *must* — leave the heathen world to His righteous judgment. Only let us see to it that no part of the heathen world is left in ignorance of the Gospel through any fault of ours. Our Lord Jesus Christ has plainly marked out our task, and we are to be His witnesses "unto the uttermost part of the Earth" (Acts 1:8). "He is the propitiation...for the sins of the whole world" (I John 2:2), and it is for us to carry the Good News to every creature. As some one has said, "The question is not so much what God will do with the heathen who have not heard the Gospel, as what God will do with us if we fail to send the Gospel to the heathen." The Son of God is "the Saviour of the world" (John 4:42), and it is a tragedy that the greater part of the world has never heard of Him. Whose fault is that?

But the Lord Jesus is not only the Saviour: He is also the Judge of all the Earth.

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For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father....For as the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself; and hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man (John 5:22-27).

In a former study in this series we had before us the question "What Occurs at Christ's Judgment Seat?" There we looked upon the bema scene in Heaven, when the saved ones appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ for the judgment of their works, in order to determine their rewards, in addition to the gift of salvation. In the present study we return to Earth again and look upon the Judgment of Living Nations, as described in Matthew 25:31-46.

Let us avoid confusing this Judgment of the Nations with the Judgment of the Lost Dead, described in Revelation 20:11-15. Both of these accounts are often headlined, "The Last and General Judgment," but there is no such things as a "General Judgment" known to Scripture. The Judgment of the Lost Dead follows the Millennium, but the Judgment of the Living Nations precedes the Millennium. A comparison of Matthew 25:31-46 with Revelation 20:11-15 will reveal many contrasts. In the later Judgment

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there is a resurrection and books are opened; in the earlier Judgment these features are absent. We shall be studying the Judgment of the Lost Dead later on in this series. Let us now look at the passage for our present study, Matthew 25:31-46:

When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory:

And before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

And He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.

Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

For I was an hungered, and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in:

Naked, and ye clothed Me: I was sick, and ye visited Me: I was in prison, and ye came unto Me.

Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered, and fed Thee? or thirsty, and gave Thee drink?

When saw we Thee a stranger, and took Thee in? or naked, and clothed Thee?

Or when saw we Thee sick, or in prison, and came unto Thee?

And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you,

Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me.

Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

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For I was an hungered, and ye gave Me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink:

I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in: naked, and ye clothed Me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited Me not.

Then shall they also answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto Thee?

Then shall He answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me.

And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

When and Why Nations are Judged

1. *The Time of the Judgment.*—This is determined by the words “when” and “then,” in the 31st verse. It will be at the time “*when* the Son of Man shall come in His glory,” at the end of the age. The Seventieth Week of Daniel will by that time have run its course, “the church which is His body” will have been “present with the Lord” for seven full years, the terrible scenes of the Great Tribulation will have come to an end with the Battle of Armagedon, and the Lord Jesus will have been “revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels” (II Thes. 1:7). “*Then* shall He sit upon the throne of His glory.” He has come to “judge and make war” (Rev. 19:11). Revealed from Heaven “in flaming fire,” He comes to take vengeance on them that know not God, and that

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obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Thes. 1:8).

2. *The Place of the Judgment.*—The location is indicated in Joel's account of this Judgment of Nations, in the 3rd chapter of his Prophecy:

I will gather all nations, and will bring them down into the Valley of Jehoshaphat (v. 2).

Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about (v. 12).

3. *The Subjects of the Judgment.*—In the Joel passage the same word, *goim*, is translated "nations" in the second verse and "heathen" twice in the twelfth verse. It is equivalent, in both Joel and Matthew, to "Gentiles." This is distinctly a Judgment of Gentiles. Arraigned before the throne of glory will be those Gentile peoples who are found living upon the Earth at the Second Advent of Christ to the Earth. If it be objected that the Valley of Jehoshaphat could not contain all these Gentiles at once, it is sufficient to answer that they may not all be there at once. They must, however, pass in review before that throne, and be divided by the Son of Man upon the throne, "as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats; and He shall set the sheep on His right hand. but the goats on the left."

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4. *The Tests of the Judgment.*—The basis of this judgment, by which the Gentiles will be tested, is their treatment of a third group, called by the King, "My brethren." These, as will be seen in Joel's account, are Jews. Doubtless they are those Jews that shall have turned to the Lord after the catching away of the church. At once upon their conversion, this Jewish remnant becomes God's evangelizing agency and begins the work of proclaiming the King's approaching advent "in the clouds of Heaven with power, and great glory" (Matt. 24:30). "And [at that time] this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations [*i. e.*, Gentiles]; and then shall the end come" (Matt. 24:14). "I will send those that escape of them unto the nations...that have not heard My fame, neither have seen My glory; and they shall declare My glory among the Gentiles" (Isa. 66:19).

How Are You Treating the Jews?

The King on the throne identifies Himself with these Jewish evangelizers, His "brethren," His "kinsmen according to the flesh" (Rom. 9:3, 5). The "sheep" on the right hand are commended for ministering to Him,

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and the "goats" on the left hand are condemned for failure to do so. The "sheep" have believed the Gospel of the Kingdom and have therefore received and harbored those who preached it to them. The "goats" have rejected the message and have therefore turned from the messengers. Both classes are surprised to learn that in thus dealing with the Jewish remnant they have been dealing with the King Himself. The same principle was revealed to Saul of Tarsus on the Damascus highway. He thought he had been doing God service in persecuting the Christians, but he learned that all the time he had been persecuting the Lord Jesus Himself: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" In all our afflictions He is afflicted.

Turning now again to Joel 3, we read:

For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem,

I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for My people and for My heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted My land.

And they have cast lots for My people; and have given a boy for an harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they might drink.

Yea, and what have ye to do with Me, O Tyre, and Zidon, and all the coasts of Palestine? will ye render Me a recompense? and if ye recompense Me, swiftly and speedily will I return your recompense upon your own head;

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Because ye have taken My silver and My gold, and have carried into your temples My goodly pleasant things:

The children also of Judah and the children of Jerusalem have ye sold unto the Grecians, that ye might remove them far from their border.

Behold, I will raise them out of the place whither ye have sold them, and will return your recompense upon your own head:

And I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hand of the children of Judah, and they shall sell them to the Sabeans, to a people far off: for the Lord hath spoken it.

Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up:

Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong.

Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord.

Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about.

Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great.

Multitudes, multitudes in the Valley of Decision: for the Day of the Lord is near in the Valley of Decision.

The sun and the moon shall be darkened and the stars shall withdraw their shining.

The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem; and the Heavens and the Earth shall shake; but the Lord will be the hope of His people, and the strength of the children of Israel.

So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, My holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no stranger pass through her any more.

HOW WILL CHRIST JUDGE THE NATIONS ?

And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim.

The correspondence between this passage and that of Matthew 25 is very striking. The Gentiles have a long score to settle on account of their treatment of the Jews, and this settlement must be made with the Man now sitting at God's right hand, in the day "when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe" (II Thes. 1:10).

5. *The Result of the Judgment.*—This is summed up in a brief sentence (verse 46) :

"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: and the righteous into life eternal."

The adjective is the same in both clauses of the sentence. The punishment is *aionian*, and the life is *aionian*. Both are *endless*. Endless punishment for those on the left hand; endless life for those on the right hand. Many have been the efforts to tone down the endless punishment, but there it stands along with the endless life. Both are *aionian*, that is everlasting, eternal, endless. Let no one trifle with this solemn declaration, "for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

When the Jews Become Mankind's Glory

THIRTY thousand Jews were slain in the Ukraine during the six months from November, 1918, to June, 1919. As I begin this article my attention is drawn to an announcement by the Zionist Organization of America, published in the newspapers of October 10, stating that, according to exact records gathered by the Jewish National Secretariat in the Ukraine country, "pogroms and bloody excesses" took place at one hundred and twenty-seven points in that region during the period mentioned, with the result that at least thirty thousand Jews were murdered by Russian troops.

So it goes, and it is ever thus. The Gentile nations owe more to the Jews than to any people in the world, and yet they go on hating them and killing them. For long time "they have taken crafty counsel against" God's chosen "people, and consulted against" His "hidden ones."

They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance (Psa. 83:3, 4).

Israel must have disappeared long ago from the face of the Earth but for God's promise.

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Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; the Lord of hosts is His name.

If those ordinances depart from before Me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before Me for ever.

Thus saith the Lord: If Heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the Earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord (Jer. 31:35-37).

Man Proposes; God Disposes

There you have it, in "deadly parallel."

Man says: "Let us cut them off from being a nation."

God says: "They shall not cease from being a nation before Me for ever."

Thus the issue is sharply drawn, and the struggle has been fierce and long; but, as, in the days of Pharaoh, who sought to destroy the seed of Jacob through conspiracy with the midwives, "the people," nevertheless, "multiplied, and waxed very mighty," even so is it to-day. They thrive upon persecution. The more they are afflicted, the more they multiply and grow (Exodus 1:12, 20).

The sufferings of Israel have been in fulfillment of prophecy, as well as the miraculous preservation of the nation from the utter destruction which the other nations

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have sought to accomplish. We have seen something of this in the former studies of this series. We are now to look at the marvelous future which the God of Jacob has planned for Jacob's seed. Listen to His Word, as it is found in the forty-sixth chapter of Isaiah, verses 3 to 13:

Hearken unto Me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by Me from the belly, which are carried from the womb:

And even to your old age I am He; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you....

Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like Me,

Declare the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure:...

Yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it.

Hearken unto Me, ye stouthearted, that are far from righteousness:

I bring near My righteousness; it shall not be far off, and My salvation shall not tarry: and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel My glory.

That is God's name for the Jews: "*Israel My glory.*" One day they shall be so manifested, for His love is upon them, and He has promised Who is faithful. For the present they are "stouthearted," or stubborn of heart. They are "far from righteousness,"

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for, as Paul explains in the tenth chapter of Romans, "they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." They failed to recognize their Messiah when He came to them, though His name for them is "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS" (Jer. 23: 5-8). But God is by no means through with His people. His faithful promise is sure of accomplishment: "I bring near My righteousness; it shall not be far off, and My salvation shall not tarry: and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel My glory."

The promises of God are never outlawed. It will not do to say that Israel's faithfulness absolves Jehovah from the obligation to fulfill His promises. It is a New Testament promise that as soon as "the fulness of the Gentiles be come in," then "all Israel shall be saved as it is written" (Rom. 11:25-27). Israel's restoration and national salvation awaits only the completion of the church. Israel's failure does not set aside God's eternal purpose to bless the world through Israel His glory. He cannot deny Himself. At the proper time in the program—

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He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit (Isa. 27:6).

Let us now examine some Scriptures showing how God proposes to thus bless the world through His people Israel. We will begin with two passages which should be considered together, one in the Old Testament and one in the New. They are Deuteronomy 32:8, 9 and Acts 17:24-27:

When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel.

For the Lord's portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance.

God's Strategic Nation-Planting

This is the Deuteronomy passage. Notice that it has to do with inheritances. The Gentiles have their inheritance, the nation of Israel has Palestine for its inheritance, and God Himself takes the nation of Israel for His inheritance. Israel is in the midst, and the Gentiles are grouped and placed with reference to "the number of the children of Israel." Now look at the passage in Acts. It is in Paul's sermon to the Athenians:

God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of Heaven and Earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

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Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, seeing He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;

And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the Earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;

That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us.

Taking these two passages together, we learn that, according to God's eternal purpose, the boundaries of the various nations—"the bounds of the peoples," "the bounds of their habitation"—are arranged by the Most High God¹ for a very definite purpose; namely, "that they should seek the Lord." And, in order that they should thus "seek the Lord," these Gentile nations are geographically located in relation to the children of Israel. The conclusion is irresistible that the seeking of the Lord on the part of the Gentile nations is to be brought about through the ministry of Israel. As we have already seen in these studies, this is the revealed program of God throughout the Scriptures. As soon as the present elective dispensation closes, with the completion of the church, then God again takes up the Jewish nation as such, and through that nation brings universal blessing to "all the Gen-

¹ This is God's specific title as "Possessor of Heaven and Earth" (Gen. 14:19,22).

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tiles" upon whom His name is called (Acts 15:13-18). It is to Israel that the word is spoken:

Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

For, behold, the darkness shall cover the Earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee.

And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising (Isa. 60: 1-3).

The divinely appointed center of the Earth is Jerusalem:

Thus saith the Lord God: This is Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the nations, and the countries are round about her (Ezek. 5:5)—

and, though Jerusalem failed in her testimony in past days, God's determination to make her "the joy of the whole Earth," and Palestine "the glory of all lands," will yet find its fulfillment in the sight of all the nations (Psa. 48:2; Ezek. 20:6, 15).

It is, of course, the presence in Jerusalem of the returned Redeemer that shall make that city the center of worldwide blessing. It was that same Redeemer who said to Ezekiel, in connection with that Prophet's vision of the return of the glory of the Lord by "the way of the east," that is, by the way of the Mount of Olives, "which is before Jerusalem on the east" (Zech. 14:4)—

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Son of Man, this is the place of My throne, and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever (Ezek. 43:1-7).

When the Holy One Tabernacles With Israel

What a time of joy that will be for redeemed Israel, when the Lord shall tabernacle with them and shall be worshipped by them as their Lord and their God! Little wonder that the Prophet Isaiah sang the pæan of joy addressed to his beloved city, recorded in the twelfth chapter of his prophecy:

And in that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise Thee: though Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortedst me.

Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation.

Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.

And in that day shall ye say, Praise the Lord, call upon His name, declare His doings among the people, make mention that His name is exalted.

Sing unto the Lord; for He hath done excellent things; this is known in all the Earth.

Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.

Observe the progression in this chapter. First, Israel is praising the Lord for pardon and restored fellowship, and then declaring

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among the peoples the good news, until it becomes "known in all the Earth." And it all comes about through the dwelling of the Holy One of Israel in the midst of the holy city itself.

This picture, with the Holy One of Israel in the midst of His redeemed and restored people, is seen in many places in the prophetic books. See, for example, Joel 2:26, 27; Zephaniah 3:14-17; Zechariah 2:5, 10. In Zechariah 8 it is written,

Thus saith the Lord; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts the holy mountain....

Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Behold, I will save My people from the east country, and from the west country;

And I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and they shall be My people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness....

And it shall come to pass that as ye were a curse among the heathen, O house of Judah, and house of Israel; so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing...

Thus saith the Lord of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you.

The Word of God is full of such wonderful promises as these, concerning the future exaltation of Jerusalem and Israel. Surely, no

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one whose heart God has touched can read such promises in cold blood. How glad we should be that Israel, so long downtrodden and persecuted, so long blinded and hardened, is one day to be lifted out of her present low condition, and in fulfilment of Jehovah's promise, established in the place of headship among the nations—the "head, and not the tail" (Deut. 28:13), and then used of God to bring blessing to all the families of the Earth! Let us give heed to the command of God's Word in Isaiah 62:6, 7, and obey it: "Ye that are Jehovah's remembrancers, take ye no rest, and give Him no rest, till He establish, and till He make Jerusalem a praise in the Earth."

"Zion stands with hills surrounded,
Zion kept by power divine;
All her foes shall be confounded,
Though the world in arms combine.
Happy Zion,
What a favored lot is thine!

"Every human tie may perish,
Friend to friend unfaithful prove;
Mothers cease their own to cherish,
Heaven and Earth at last remove;
But no changes
Can attend Jehovah's love.

"In the furnace God may prove thee,
Thence to bring thee forth more bright;
But can never cease to love thee;
Thou art precious in His sight:
God is with thee,
God, thine everlasting light."

If You Were Living in the Golden Age

THE Bible name for the Golden Age is "the Dispensation of the Fulness of the Times."

In the first chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians it is declared that God "hath purposed in Himself, that in the Dispensation of the Fulness of the Times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in Heaven and which are on Earth."

Commenting on this Biblical name for the Golden Age, the Scofield Reference Bible says:

This, the seventh and last of the ordered ages which condition human life on the Earth is identical with the Kingdom covenanted to David (II Sam. 7:8-17; Zech. 12:8; Luke 1:31-33; I Cor. 15:24), and gathers into itself under Christ all past "times:"

1. The time of oppression and misrule ends by Christ taking His Kingdom (Isa. 11:3, 4).

2. The time of testimony and divine forbearance ends in judgment (Matt. 25:31-46; Acts 17:30, 31; Rev. 20:7-15).

3. The time of toil ends in rest and reward (II Thess. 1:6, 7).

4. The time of suffering ends in glory (Rom. 8:17, 18).

5. The time of Israel's blindness and chastisement ends in restoration and conversion (Rom. 11:25-27; Ezek. 39:25-29).

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6. The Times of the Gentiles end in smiting of the image and the setting up of the Kingdom of the Heavens (Dan. 2:34, 35; Rev. 19:15-21).

7. The time of creation's thralldom ends in deliverance at the manifestation of the sons of God (Gen. 3:17; Isa. 11:6-8; Rom. 8:19-21).

When the Spirit Said it Six Times

A commonly used name for the Golden Age is the Millennium.

It is sometimes objected that we ought not to employ this term because it nowhere occurs in the Bible. It is true that the English Bible does not have the term, because *millennium* is a Latin word; but its English equivalent occurs repeatedly in the twentieth chapter of The Revelation. *Millennium* is a compound Latin word, made up of *mille*, a thousand, and *annum*, years, and its English equivalent therefore is A Thousand Years. Now let us see how this name for the Golden Age is employed in the Scriptures:

And I saw an angel come down from Heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

And he laid hold on the Dragon, that old Serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him A THOUSAND YEARS,

And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till THE THOUSAND YEARS should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

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And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped the Beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ A THOUSAND YEARS.

But the rest of the dead lived not again until THE THOUSAND YEARS were finished. This is the first resurrection.

Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him A THOUSAND YEARS.

And when THE THOUSAND YEARS are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison (Rev. 20:1-7).

Thus we see that in these seven verses the Millennium is mentioned by name no less than six times. This is by no means all that the Bible has to say about the Golden Age, or the Dispensation of the Fulness of the Times, but even here there is much instruction that may be gathered up concerning that wonderful time.

1. The first item in the program is the restraining of Satan, who is to be locked up in "the bottomless pit" (Greek, *abyss*), for the whole period of the thousand years. It seems a perfectly easy thing to do when the time for it has arrived. There is no struggle, no difficulty about it at all. One lone

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angel acts as policeman, and all by himself he puts Satan under arrest and shuts him up in prison. There is no trial, for long ago "the Prince of this World hath been judged" (John 16:7-11, R. V.). The sentence has been pronounced, and though its execution be long delayed, in due time "shall the Prince of this World be cast out" (John 12:31). In our next study we are to examine the career of this terrible Prince: suffice it now to say that for the whole thousand years of the Millennial Kingdom this World will be free from "the wiles of the Devil," free from the subtle deceptions of "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience."

2. In that day the Lord Jesus Christ will reign as universal King. This is implied in the Revelation passage, and it is taught elsewhere in the Scriptures with great clearness.

For unto us a Child is born, unto to us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Father of the Ages, the Prince of Peace.

Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever.

The zeal of the LORD of Hosts will perform this (Isa. 9:6, 7).

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the Earth.

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In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is His name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS (Jer. 23:5, 6).

And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shall call his name JESUS.

He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David:

And He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever: and of His Kingdom there shall be no end (Luke 1:31-33).

See also Ezekiel 21:26, 27; Daniel 2:44; 7:13, 14; Zechariah 14:9.

This will be the final answer to the petition contained in the Disciples' Prayer: "Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven."

Think of it! The will of God *done*, and done *in Earth*, even as it is done *in Heaven*!

With a King on the throne, both *willing* and *able*. Sometimes rulers are willing but not able; and sometimes they are able and not willing. This King will both *will* and *do* the good pleasure of God.

A scepter of righteousness will be the scepter of His Kingdom. Righteousness shall be the girdle of His loins, and faithfulness the girdle of His reins.

In these days it is impossible for human governments and rulers to rule righteously; our courts are unable to get at the facts, even

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when all concerned are honestly trying to do so; and very often lying witnesses and fraudulent lawyers, and sometimes even crooked judges, conspire to thwart the course of justice. But the King, in the Golden Age, will be omniscient and omnipotent. He will not need to hear evidence, or depend upon witnesses, nor will He be obliged to employ armies or police forces to execute His will.

He shall not judge after the sight of His eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of His ears;

But with righteousness shall He judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the Earth (Isa. 11:3, 4).

He will enforce His own laws and decrees, and righteousness will be meted out without delay upon every one who violates them.

He shall smite the Earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked (Isa. 11:4).

It may well be that the words of Psalm 101:7, 8 are His own words, as the Righteous Judge of the whole Earth:

He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within
My house:

He that speaketh falsehood shall not be established before Mine eyes.

Morning by morning will I destroy all the wicked of the land;

To cut off all the workers of iniquity from the city of Jehovah (R. V.).

For His equipment as King, the Son of God, in the Golden Age, will have the Spirit

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of Jehovah resting upon Him in all the plenitude of His power. Unto Him He will be "the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the LORD; and He shall make Him quick of scent in the fear of the LORD" (Isa. 11:2, 3).

"Endeavor then, dear reader," says Mr. W. Trotter, "to realize what would be the condition of a Kingdom under the absolute government of a monarch so wise as never to make one single mistake, so equitable as to deal even-handed justice to all, so tender-hearted as to rule with the gentlest sway, so pious and benevolent as to seek no object but the glory of God and the well-being of His subjects, and so powerful as to secure the absolute submission of all within the sphere of His dominions! What a Kingdom! But when we think of such a Kingdom as extending over the whole Earth, and embracing all nations within its limits; and when we understand that Christ Himself is to be its Head and Lord, and that the risen saints are to be His associates on the throne, all language fails, and the heart can only find relief in adoration too profound to be expressed!"

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Who Are These that Live and Reign?

The writer just quoted has referred to the association of the risen saints with the Son of God in His rule. It is written, "they lived [literally, *lived again*] and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

Who are "*they*"? These co-rulers include "the armies which were in Heaven," seen following the King as He comes out of Heaven to take up His great power and reign (Rev. 19:14). They also include the Tribulation saints,—"*them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped the Beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands.*" These "*lived again, and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*"

In a word, Christ's redeemed ones will be united with Him in His reign over the Earth. "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?...Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" (I Cor. 6:2, 3; see also II Timothy 2:11, 12; Luke 12:32; 19:17-19; Revelation 2:26, 27).

We have already seen that in the midst of this universal Empire Israel shall have her place. The old theocratic government will

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be re-established, with the Twelve Apostles ruling over Israel, subject, of course, to the universal rule of the Heavenly Emperor.

And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city (Isa. 1:26).

Peter...said unto Him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed Thee; what shall we have therefore?

And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. 19:27, 28)

3. In the Golden Age, the land of Palestine will be the center of the whole Earth.

Whatever men may think of the land of Palestine, there can be no doubt as to God's love for it. It is a "land which the LORD thy God careth for: the eyes of the LORD thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year" (Deut. 11.12).

In Daniel 8:9 it is described as "the pleasant land"; and in Ezekiel 20:6, 15, God Himself speaks of it as "a land that I had espied for them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands...the land which I had given them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands."

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In the eleventh chapter of Daniel the land is twice called "the glorious land," or "the goodly land," "the land of delight" (verses 16 and 41, *text and margin*).

The present desolation of the land is all in fulfilment of prophecy, but prophecy does not stop with predicting its desolation. The same God who said

I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation...and I will bring the land into desolation: and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it (Lev. 26: 31, 32).

has also said

Prophesy therefore concerning the land of Israel, and say unto the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I have spoken in My jealousy and in My fury, because ye have borne the shame of the heathen [*goim*=nations, or Gentiles]:

Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; I have lifted up Mine hand, Surely the heathen [i. e., nations] that are about you, they shall bear their shame.

But ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to My people Israel; for they are at hand to come.

For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn unto you, and ye shall be tilled and sown (Ezek. 36:6-9, ff).

It is plain that the return of less than fifty thousand exiles from Babylon did not fulfill these promises, and there they stand. God has spoken, and He will perform. He hath said, and He will do it.

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The land given to Abraham and his seed has never yet been fully occupied by the people of Israel. In Genesis 15:18 is the unconditional title deed to the whole region lying between the Nile and Euphrates. The language is most explicit; it is "from the great river Euphrates, even unto the uttermost sea," that their coast shall be (Deut. 1. 7; 11:24). Joshua's commission extended "from the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates... unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun," that is, the Mediterranean on the west. The Scriptures guarantee the rulership of the whole world to Abraham and his seed (Rom. 4:13), and when Israel is finally established in the Kingdom she will doubtless occupy all that territory bounded on the west by the Mediterranean sea, on the southwest by the Red sea, on the southeast by the Persian gulf, on the northeast by the Caspian sea, and on the northwest by the Black sea. It is the most strategically located land on the globe. Through these vast inland seas the restored nation of Israel will be able to reach out to every nation on Earth. It is true that much of the land I have described is occupied by the great Syrian desert, but that does not matter, for in that day the

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curse upon "the creation itself" shall be removed, and the wilderness shall blossom as the rose.

4. In the Golden Age the city of Jerusalem will be the universal capital of the whole Earth.

As already pointed out, the restored Earthly city, as it will appear in the Millennium, must not be confused with "the holy city, New Jerusalem," which John saw "coming down out of Heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (Rev. 21:2). John gives us the measurements of the Heavenly Jerusalem, showing it to be twelve thousand furlongs, or 1,500 miles, in length and breadth and height (Rev. 21:16). This is two-thirds as large as the total area of the United States. But the Heavenly city will not be placed on the Earth; it will be suspended over the Earth, and visible from it, "and the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it" (Rev. 21:24).

The restored Earthly Jerusalem is described in detail, with its surroundings, in the final chapters of Ezekiel. In chapters 40-48 of that Prophecy there is a description, very circumstantial and minute, of the whole land, as it shall be during the Golden Age we are contemplating. The new city and its

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surroundings are described in chapter 45: 1-8.

The whole tract, given to Jehovah as an oblation or offering, will be 25,000 reeds square (Ezek. 48:20). A reed is six "great cubits" (40:5; 41:8), or about ten feet and eleven inches according to our measurement. Thus we have a tract of land, four-square, about fifty miles on each side, or 2,500 square miles, to be given to the King Jehovah-Jesus, for metropolitan purposes, during the Golden Age. It will be divided into three parts, on the plan of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, one portion fifty by twenty miles being for the priests, a second portion of equal size for the Levites, and a third portion ten by fifty miles for the city itself with its surrounding "residue" set apart for food for them that serve the city (48:18). This third portion is called "a profane place for the city" (48:15). The city itself will be about nine miles square, having a circuit of 37 miles (48:15, 16, 35). The old city has never been more than five miles in circumference. The Millennial temple, within the restored city, will be about a mile square.

On each side of the city a portion is set aside for "the Prince." This may be David himself, though his name in this connection

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is usually applied by the commentators to the Messiah as his Root and Offspring. But let the reader consult the passages, and decide for himself whether David in his own person is meant. They are Ezekiel 34:23, 24; 37:24, 25, Jeremiah 30:9.

David is with the Lord now, and it may be God's purpose to place him in the Millennial Kingdom in something of his old relation to his people. No one will question God's power to do so, nor His right to do so if He desires—and why not? Are not the saints to judge the Earth, and reign with the Lord?

The city of Jerusalem, thus restored, will be the world's center.

Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the Word of Jehovah from Jerusalem (Isa. 2:3).

That is to say, Jerusalem will be not only the political center, but also the religious center, of the whole Earth. From thence shall be administered the perfect law of God, and from thence also shall be regulated the world's worship (Zech. 14:16).

Zion has suffered, and suffered greatly, in fulfillment of the prophetic Word. It has been "plowed as a field," and has "become heaps," and "the mountain of the house" has been made "as the high places of the forest" (Micah 3:12). But see also Micah 4:1-8.

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What a wonderful picture! A Golden Age indeed! And it is coming! It is coming, because He is coming Whose right it is to reign. In due time He came to die, and in due time He will come again to wield the scepter of righteous rule; even He "Who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords" (I Tim. 6:15). "For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry" (Heb. 10:37).

Satan's Life-Story: Past, Present, Future

THERE is a surprise in store for the man who for the first time sits down with his Bible to learn what it teaches about Satan. For it is more than likely that before thus coming to his Bible for the truth about Satan he has learned much about him that is not true.

Nothing could be further from the truth than the almost universal conception of him as a black hideous, repulsive monster, with horns and hoofs and forked tail, reigning as King over lost souls in Hell, and inciting men on Earth to loathsome deeds of lust and foulness.

The Bible picture of Satan is in sharp contrast with all this. Instead of being black and hideous, Satan appears as an angel of light. Instead of reigning as King in Hell, Satan has never yet been in Hell, although that place was prepared for him and his angels; and when he is finally cast into Hell it will not be to reign as King, but to be the most miserable and helpless sufferer there. And instead of inciting men to deeds of lust and foulness, Satan rather inspires men to deeds of "reform" and "world-improvement."

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The natural man, "the flesh," has no need of Satan's assistance to descend to all kinds of vileness; Satan does not appear in the terrible arraignment of the race in the first chapter of Romans; the indictment there is against "*men* who hold down the truth in unrighteousness." God "gave them up," and nothing more than that was needed to plunge them into the sink of iniquity described in the closing verses of that terrible chapter.

Satan Strong for "Religion"

Satan operates in the spiritual realm. His favorite device is to enlist men in *religious* enterprises contrary to the Word of God, "having the *form* of godliness, but denying the *power* thereof."

It is probably no exaggeration to state that the great majority of people do not believe in the existence of Satan at all as a person. We hear much of "the evil principle," but the Word of God speaks of "the evil *one*." The personality and reality of Satan are as clearly taught in the Scriptures as the personality and reality of God Himself.

Doubtless it is quite agreeable to Satan's plans that his existence should be ignored, but it is well for us to be "not ignorant of his devices."

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In "the good fight of faith" there are three battle lines. The first line is described in the seventh of Romans, where the believer is seen fighting against the law of sin in his members, and seeking to overcome it in his own strength. The fight is desperate, and it is hopeless, too, until the believer cries out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me?" The second line is seen in Romans 8, where the indwelling Holy Spirit takes up the fight in the believer's behalf, and gives him victory over the old nature. And the third line is seen in Ephesians 6, where the believer is exhorted to "put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of *the Devil*. For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the Principalities, against the Powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the Heavenly places" (vs. 11, 12). I have quoted from the Revised Version, but the case is stated even more vividly in Conybeare's translation:

Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the wiles of the Devil. For the adversaries with whom we wrestle are not flesh and blood, but they are the Principalities, the Powers, and the Sovereigns of this present darkness, the spirits of evil in the Heavens.

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Let us not, then, confine our thinking, as touching Satan, to the saloons and dives, house of prostitution, penitentiaries, insane asylums, and the like. We should have such things as these without Satan; they belong to "the works of the flesh," which "are manifest: . . . adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like" (Gal. 5:19-21).

It is not that Satan is free from responsibility for the presence of these things in the world; they are the result of sin, and it was he who brought sin into the world; but having brought sin into the world, he has only to let men have their own way with sin, and it goes on its corrupting course.

I am not at all sure but that Satan would, if he could, abolish from the world every one of these "works of the flesh," for these out-breaking evils hinder rather than help him in his supreme effort *to make this world independent of God!* It is his purpose to overthrow the throne of God, and to establish himself permanently as "the Prince of this World," and toward the accomplishment of this purpose he is bending every energy, day and night.

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It would be well for those who desire to walk with God in these present days to look into His Word with reference to the great movements in the various denominations looking toward world-betterment, and giving secondary place or no place at all to the work of soul-winning; it may be that Satan has more to do with these things than is supposed. Let us beware lest, through "a zeal for God" which is "not according to knowledge," we are caught in "the snare of the Devil" with those "who are taken captive by him at his will."

The first passage of Scripture which we shall study in tracing Satan's life-story is a portion of the twenty-eighth chapter of Ezekiel. In the first ten verses of this chapter the Prince of Tyre is rebuked by the Word of Jehovah for the sin of blasphemy. This Prince of Tyre was evidently the man who occupied the throne of Tyre at the time the prophecy was uttered. He claimed divine honors for himself, saying, "I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas."

When Satan was a "Cherub"

His awful end is predicted in these verses, and then, beginning at verse 11, there is a denunciation of the *King* of Tyre, which goes

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far beyond any Earthly ruler. The person addressed, as many have recognized, is Satan, who, as "the power behind the throne," ruled the Kingdom of Tyre through the Prince of Tyre already referred to. There are other passages of Scripture in which Satan is thus indirectly addressed (see, for example, Genesis 3:15 and Matthew 16:23). Let us now examine these verses in Ezekiel 28:

Moreover the lord of Jehovah came unto me saying,

Son of Man, take up a lamentation upon the King of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.

Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.

Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.

Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.

By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.

Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by rea-

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son of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.

Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee.

All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never [shalt] thou [be] any more.

All will agree that this language goes beyond any human King, and also that it perfectly corresponds with what we know from other sources about Satan. He was the real ruler of Tyre, though he did not appear as such, except to the eye of God. The last clause of the quotation is somewhat involved, the translators having supplied the words "shalt" and "be." Satan's annihilation is not taught here or elsewhere, as will appear later.

From this passage we learn that Satan was created as one of the cherubim—"the anointed cherub that covereth." Cherubim always stand in Scripture for the guardianship of the righteousness of God. Carefully examine Genesis 3:24; Exodus 25:17-22; 26:31-33;; Psalm 80:1, and the other passages. The whole subject is interesting and should be treated in a separate article, which may be forthcoming later. It is evident that in

the original creation Satan was a great dignitary, perhaps at the very head of the creation of God prior to that catastrophe which overtook the Earth between the first and second verses of the first chapter of Genesis. His title, "the covering cherub," may indicate that he was appointed to guard the throne of God, whose foundations are righteousness and judgment (Psa. 89:14, R. V.). He had his place in "Eden the garden of God," and upon "the holy mountain of God." He was glorious in beauty, sealing up the sum, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.

How Sin Entered the Universe

But Satan fell from his high estate, for "iniquity was found in" him. Pride was his undoing (I Tim. 3:6). The story of his fall is found in the fourteenth chapter of Isaiah, where he appears as the King of Babylon (v. 4), again ruling as "the power behind the throne," though that throne was occupied by a human Prince. His name as given here is Lucifer, which means Day-star:

How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into Heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north.

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I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;
I will be like the Most High.

Yet thou shalt be brought down to Hell, to
the sides of the pit.

Here is seen the introduction of sin into the universe. When it took place is not revealed, except, of course, that it antedated man's sin and fall. Doubtless it must be placed, as we have already intimated, between the first two verses of Genesis.

Satan invaded the garden of Eden in the form of a serpent. Not the serpent as we now know him, crawling on his belly in the dust, for this is the result of the curse; but erect and beautiful. Eve was beguiled with his subtlety, and therefore "sin entered into the world, and death through sin" (II Cor. 11:3; Rom. 5:12-14). In the covenant which God gave to Adam and Eve the promise was made that Satan should one day be overthrown and destroyed by the coming Deliverer, who should be "the Seed of the woman."

Let it not be supposed, however, that the sentence against Satan has been fully executed. Satan is still "going to and fro in the Earth, and walking up and down in it" (Job 1:7. He, "as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (I Peter 5:8). He still has access into the Heavens, where he accuses the brethren day and night. Luke

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10:18,—“I beheld Satan as lightning fall from Heaven,”—is anticipative, a prediction to be fulfilled when the scenes of Revelation 12 are enacted. Satan is still “the Prince of this World,” and “the whole world lieth in” him (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; I John 5:19, R. V.). Satan is “the God of this Age,” who blinds the minds of unbelievers (II Cor. 4:4, R. V.). He is “the Prince of the Power of the air,” which evidently means that he is—and we know from Scripture elsewhere that he *is*—at the head of innumerable hosts of demons who infest the air to do his bidding. He is “the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience” (Eph. 2:2). Under limitations imposed by God, Satan *had* (and it may be still *has*, except in the case of believers), the power of death (Heb. 2:14, 15). For believers, “the fear of death,” and even death itself, potentially, has been abolished through the death of the Son of God in their behalf. (Compare Hebrews 2 with II Timothy 1:10.)

The advocacy of Christ is set over against the accusing work of Satan for the safety of the saved, but even yet Satan is sometimes permitted to “sift as wheat” or test the children of God, while Christ keeps them in faith

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through his intercessory work (Job 1:6-11; Luke 22:31, 32; I Cor. 5:5; I Tim. 1:20; compare I John 2:1).

It was Satan who "entered into Judas" (John 13:27). It was Satan who tempted Ananias and Sapphira to lie to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3). Satan hindered Paul "once and again" in his apostolical ministry (I Thes. 2:18).

The fate of Satan is clearly revealed in Scripture. At the beginning of the Great Tribulation he and his forces shall be cast out of Heaven, and during the Great Tribulation he will do his utmost, energizing the Beast and False Prophet, to establish himself in permanent power as Prince of this World. But his efforts will come to naught, and at the opening of the Millennium he will be shut up in the abyss for a thousand years. After the thousand years he is "loosed for a little season," and will lead in a final effort to overthrow the Kingdom of God. Failing in this he finds his doom in the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20).

I have referred to the demons as Satan's agents. He has human agents also, men posing as "ministers of righteousness," but who are really Satan's servants, and "whose

end shall be according to their works." Wherever a professing minister of righteousness is denying the Lord that bought him, or turning away from the doctrine of Christ, there you have a minister of Satan, transforming himself into a minister of Christ. "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light" (II Cor. 11: 13-15). The ecclesiastical world has many such men in it today. And sometimes, indeed, institutions which men suppose to be churches of Christ are in reality "synagogues of Satan" (Rev. 2:9).

Christians who read these lines may take fright as they see what the Scriptures of God have to say about their foe. There is no need of fright, however, for those same Scriptures tell us precisely how to meet our adversary.

Many even among God's dear children make the foolish and dangerous mistake of laughing at Satan, and treating the whole subject lightly. This ought not to be. Michael the archangel,—that is, the Chief Angel,—did not so, "when contending with the Devil, he disputed about the body of Moses." Michael, great and high as he is, recognized in Satan even a higher dignitary

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than he, and he "durst not [that is, he *dare* not] bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee!" (Jude 9; compare Zech. 3:2). Satan is not a joke, and he is not to be laughed at. That is not the way.

In "the good fight of faith" the first enemy we meet is "the flesh," and the Word of God tells us that this enemy is to be *avoided*, rather than fought (II Tim. 2:22; I Peter 2:11; I Cor. 6:18).

The second enemy is "the world," and we are to be separated from this, as crucified to it (Gal. 6:14).

But when we come to the third enemy, "the Devil," we are called to *fight*. The fighting is not our own, it is "in the Lord, and in the power of His might," but it is real fighting, nevertheless, and with a real foe. "Submit yourselves therefore to God. *Resist* the Devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7). "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil" (Eph. 6:10-19). We need not *fear* even so great an enemy as Satan, but we must *fight* him with the weapons God supplies, and in the energy of the Holy Spirit if we are to quit ourselves like men, well pleasing to God.

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"Did we in our own strength confide,
Our striving would be losing;
Were not the right Man on our side,
The Man of God's own choosing.
Dost ask who that may be?
Christ Jesus, it is He;
Lord Sabaoth is His name,
From age to age the same,
And He must win the battle.

"And though this world, with devils filled,
Should threaten to undo us;
We will not fear, for God hath willed
His truth to triumph through us.
The Prince of Darkness grim,—
We tremble not for him;
His rage we can endure,
For, lo! his doom is sure,—
One little word shall fell him.

"That word above all earthly powers—
No thanks to them!—abideth;
The Spirit and the gifts are ours
Through Him Who with us sideth.
Let goods and kindred go,
This mortal life also:
The body they may kill:
God's truth abideth still,
His Kingdom is for ever."

The Judgment at the Great White Throne

“IT IS appointed unto men once to die, but after this the Judgment.” We have already, in this series of studies, seen that, instead of there being but one “Last and Final Judgment,” to which the whole world hastens, the Scriptures tell of many Judgments. Seven of these were reviewed in a former article:

1. *The Judgment of Believers’ Sins.* This took place at Calvary, where the Son of God bore our sins in His own body on the tree. It is on this account that for His sins the believer “shall not come into judgment” (John 5:24, R. V.). “Being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him” (Rom. 5:9). “There is therefore now no judgment to them that are in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8:1, R. V.). “For He hath made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin: that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him” (II Cor. 5:21). This was when “Christ suffered for our sins, the Just for the Unjust, that He might bring us to God” (I Peter 3:18).

2. *The Judgment of Self in the Believer.* This should be going on all the time. “For

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if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world" (I Cor. 11:31, 32). When a child of God falls into sin, his fellowship with God is interrupted. If he then judges himself before God, confessing his sins, God "is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9). If, however, the believer refuses to judge himself, he compels his loving Father to *chasten* him, that he "*should not be condemned with the world.*" "For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons" (Heb. 12:6-8).

3. *The Judgment of Believers' Works.* This will take place before the Bema, or Judgment-Seat of Christ, after we are caught up to meet Him in the air. Then it is that "we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, . . . whether it be good or bad" (II Cor. 5:10). It is not the

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sins of believers that are here brought under review, but their works. Since Christ died for sins, they are forever put away, but every work must be judged, to determine the believer's reward. The Apostle Paul wrote, in I Corinthians 3:10-15, explaining this Judgment as follows: "According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; *but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.*"

4. *The Judgment of Living Nations.* This is described in Matthew 25:31-46. It will take place "when the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him." It is then that He shall "sit

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upon the throne of His glory; and before Him shall be gathered all nations,"—that is, those found upon the Earth at His second advent to establish the Kingdom of Heaven upon Earth. This Judgment has already been treated in these studies. In it the Gentile nations are called to account for their treatment of Israel.

5. *The Judgment of Israel.* This is to determine who among the children of Israel found upon Earth at the Lord's glorious appearing shall go into the Kingdom. The rebels will be purged out, and they shall not enter into the land of Israel (Ezek. 20:33-38).

6. *The Judgment of Fallen Angels.* Christ has decreed that His church shall be associated with Him in this Judgment. "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" (I Cor. 6:3.) "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the Judgment of the great day" (Jude 6).

7. *The Judgment of the Great White Throne.* This is to be the subject of our present article. The Scripture material is in Revelation 20:11-15:

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And I saw a Great White Throne, and Him that sat on it, from Whose face the Earth and the Heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the Book of Life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and Hades delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

And death and Hades were cast into the Lake of Fire. This is the second death.

And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the Lake of Fire.

This is at once the most majestic and the most terrible passage in all Scripture. May God deliver us from studying it, or even reading it, in cold blood! Let us tread softly as we seek to realize the awful fate that awaits the enemies of our God and His Christ. How it ought to stir us to snatch the brands from the burning before it is eternally too late!

The Judgment of the Great White Throne is the Judgment of the Lost Dead, who are raised from the dead for their final judgment. It follows the Millennial reign of the Lord Jesus Christ as King over the whole Earth. The closing scenes of the Millennial Kingdom are described in the verses im-

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mediately preceding the passage we are now to study. Satan has been loosed out of his prison for a little season, and he has gone out

to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the Earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the Earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of Heaven, and devoured them. And the Devil that deceived them was cast into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone, where the Beast and the False Prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever (Rev. 20:7-10).

Then comes the Great Assize. The impenitent dead must now hear their awful doom, and be forever consigned to the "Lake of Fire and Brimstone," to be "tormented day and night for ever and ever."

Let us now behold the terrible scene, as it is here described by the Holy Spirit of Truth.

The Judge

As we look upon the Great White Throne, our attention is at once directed toward "Him that sat upon it." We know that face, for it is the face which was once marred for us; those hands, too, bear the marks of the nails by which He was pierced; and there are even other such marks upon His adorable person. His feet and His side show the

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openings through which poured the saving and cleansing flood as He gave His life for His enemies. He died for all, and yet there are these vast throngs arraigned before Him who would not have His salvation. They must now, therefore, face Him as Judge. Having rejected "the blood of the Lamb," there remains for them only "the wrath of the Lamb." He sits upon that Great White Throne, for to Him is committed all judgment. It was He Himself who said,

The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent Him....For as the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself; and hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man....The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation (John 5: 22-29).

As we have already shown in this series of studies, the "hour" here spoken of does not indicate a period of sixty minutes, but rather an indefinite, or at least undefined, period of time, as in verse 25 of the same chapter, where an hour is referred to which has already lasted nearly two thousand years. The

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“resurrection of life” is the first resurrection, which precedes the Millennium; the “resurrection of damnation” is connected with the Judgment of the Great White Throne, which we are now studying. In the first resurrection the Son of God calls forth all who sleep in Him; in the second resurrection that same Son of God calls forth all who have gone out of this life in rebellion against God, refusing the salvation He offers. “Blessed and holy” indeed “is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years” (Rev. 20:6).

These saved ones, these “priests of God and of Christ,” as I understand it, will participate in the Judgment of the Great White Throne as associated with the glorified Christ in that Judgment. “Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?” (I Cor. 6:2.) The New Testament church, at least, since it is the bride of Christ, may be expected to sit beside Him as He executes judgment from the Great White Throne.

Think for a moment of the transcendent dignity of “Him that sat upon” the throne. It is written here that from His face “the

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Earth and the Heaven fled away; and there was no place for them." Surely, language could not go beyond this in setting forth His splendor and majesty. The Judgment of the Great White Throne will not take place upon the Earth, nor yet on any of the Heavenly planets, for from the face of "Him that sat upon" the throne "the Earth and the Heaven fled away!" The Earth and the Heaven are His own creation, and they are now abashed at His presence, and flee from before His face. It was to this Judge of the Whole Earth that the Father once said:

Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the Earth; and the Heavens are the works of Thine hands;

They shall perish; but Thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment;

And as a vesture shalt Thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail (Heb. 1:10-12; compare Psa. 102:12, 24-27).

The Judgment of the Great White Throne, then, must be located in space, and apart from the Earth and all the Heavenly bodies. This will all be perfectly easy for the Judge upon that throne, for He it is who "stretcheth out the north over the empty space, and hangeth the Earth upon nothing" (Job 26:7). "By Him were all things created, that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, visible and

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invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him [or in Him] all things consist [or hold together]" (Col. I:16, 17). He upholdeth "all things by the word of His power" (Heb. 1:3).

The Judged

Look upon that vast sea of doomed men and women. They are the lost ones. All the saved have already been gathered into the Father's house; these are the impenitent dead. They are here to listen to the righteous judgment of the righteous Judge who sought to be their Saviour. The Judge of All the Earth must do right; He must act justly. In the Gospel a way has been provided by which God might be just and the justifier of all who would receive His salvation, but these would have none of the salvation nor of the Saviour. Look upon them with the seer who writes. He says: "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God. . . . And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and Hades delivered up the dead which were in them." The word "Hell" here is wrong. Hell is the name for the Lake of Fire, and the Lake of Fire will never

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give up the dead which are in it. The Lake of Fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels, is a place of everlasting fire (Matt. 25:41), and those who are consigned to that awful place are left without hope, in "the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (Mark 9:42-48). This, let it be remembered, is the testimony of our Lord Himself, who is the True and Faithful Witness, and Who cannot lie.

Hades, the place referred to in our present passage, was, until the resurrection and ascension of our Lord, the place of all departed spirits, though between the saved and the lost there was "a great gulf fixed" (Luke 16:26). At our Lord's ascension He "led a multitude of captives," whom He had first released from Hades by descending "into the lower parts of the Earth" (Eph. 4:8-10). "Since that time the saved, upon leaving their bodies, are at once conducted into the presence of God, and are "at home with the Lord" (II Cor. 5:8). Only the unsaved dead are now in Hades.

All these must come forth. Death, Hades, the sea,—these all disgorge their contents, and the lost dead are brought forth to stand in terror before Him whose grace they have

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despised. He had been opened to them as the Door into Heaven, but they would not enter. The Door is now at last shut, and they are left without. How terrible! Even to think of it causes us to shudder; but how much worse it will be for those who shall stand there, stripped of all distinction, awaiting the pronouncement of their inevitable doom! Oh, that our God might, by these "things which must shortly come to pass," quicken us in His service, so that while the Door yet stands ajar we may rescue some who are tottering to the slaughter! How can we stand idly by in such a day as this?

If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain;

If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not He that pondereth the heart consider it? and He that keepeth thy soul, doth not He know it? and shall not He render to every man according to his works? (Prov. 24:11, 12.)

The Judgment

1. *The books were opened,...and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works...they were judged every man according to their works* (verses 12, 13). These books contain the records of "their works." There are two reasons for the presence of these books: (1) in order that it might be

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shown that no man standing before that Bar of Eternal Justice could stand upon his own record for a single moment; the truth will then be demonstrated that "there is none righteous, no, not one" (Rom. 3:10; compare Psa. 14:1-3); and (2), since there are degrees of punishment, the books must be there to determine what each man's punishment shall be (Luke 12:47, 48).

2. *And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life....And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the Lake of Fire* (verses 12, 15). In the 14th verse the Lake of Fire is identified with "the second death," which has already been referred to in verse 6 of this chapter. That it is not annihilation is shown by comparing Revelation 19:20 and 20:10. For a thousand years the Beast and False Prophet had been in the Lake of Fire, and were still conscious and tormented. Annihilation is not taught in the Scriptures.

One turns from this subject with mixed feelings of gladness and sadness. How good it is to be saved! and how terrible to be lost! We are surrounded on every hand by those who, in the light of the Word of God, are going down to Christless graves, with the pros-

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pect before them of helping to make up that throng of doomed unbelievers. Let us cease not to cry aloud in their ears, that they may turn from the Broad Way that leadeth unto destruction, and enter upon the Narrow Way that leadeth unto life.

After the Millennium—What?

“**T**HEN cometh the end.”

The Millennium is not the end.
Something else follows it.

The Millennium, blessed as it is, will be followed by something even better. In the Millennium righteousness will *reign*, but in the eternal state which follows the Millennium righteousness will *dwell*. In the Millennium evil will be *restrained*, and Satan will be in the abyss temporarily, but in the eternal state evil will be *absent*, and Satan will be in the Lake of Fire, to remain there. How good it will be to get beyond the *penalty* of sin not only, and beyond its *power* not only, but also beyond its very *presence*! How good to know in that day that finally we have been brought beyond the possibility of ever again grieving our Heavenly Father! Of that time John Fawcett sings:

“From sorrow, toil, and pain,
And sin, we shall be free;
And perfect love and friendship reign
Through all eternity.”

Not much of detail is revealed in Scripture concerning the eternal state that shall follow the Millennium. Enough, however, is vouchsafed to set our hearts longing for it.

A passage bearing upon our subject is contained in the 15th chapter of First Corinthians, verses 22-28:

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming.

Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet.

The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

For He hath put all things under His feet. But when He saith all things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted, which did put all things under Him.

And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.

The Resurrection "Ranks"

The word "order" is a military term (Greek, *tagma*), occurring only here; it means rank, or cohort, or band, or company. All will rise from the dead, but not all at one time. The Lord Jesus came forth at the head of the list, the firstborn from the dead; they that are His will come forth in the first resurrection at His pre-millennial coming; and "then cometh the end." After the thousand years are finished, after Satan has been loosed from his prison for "a little sea-

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son," after his organized rebellion against God has been brought to nought by fire descending out of Heaven, after the Judgment of the Great White Throne with its terrible Lake of Fire; "then cometh the end." The Lord Jesus, all His enemies subdued, now prepares to subject Himself to the Father, "that God may be all in all." At the name of Jesus every knee has come to bow, and every tongue has confessed His lordship; and "then cometh the end."

The first eight verses of Revelation 21 give us a picture of conditions in the eternal state:

And I saw a new Heaven and a new Earth: for the first Heaven and the first Earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of Heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

And I heard a great voice out of Heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God.

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And He said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

And He said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

AFTER THE MILLENNIUM—WHAT?

He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son.

But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

From this passage it is a simple matter to discern and set in order some elements of the eternal state:

1. *There will be a new Heaven and a new Earth.* In the preceding chapter it is written that from the face of the Judge sitting upon the Great White Throne “the Earth and the Heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them.” In the first chapter of Hebrews the language of Psalm 102: 25-27 is shown to be addressed to the Lord Jesus, saying:

Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the Earth: and the Heavens are the work of Thy hands.

They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt Thou change them, and they shall be changed:

But Thou art the same, and Thy years shall have no end.

In the third chapter of Second Peter, where the Day of the Lord is carried straight through the Millennium and up to the beginning of the eternal state, it is written:

By the Word of God the Heavens were of old, and the Earth standing out of the water and in the water:

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Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:

But the Heavens and the Earth, which are now, by the same Word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the Day of Judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

But the Day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the Heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the Earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness.

Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the Heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new Heavens and a new Earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. (Compare also Isaiah 55:17 and 66:22.)

After Heaven's and Earth's Fire Bath

From this Scripture it is clear that the present Heaven and Earth are to be made new by renovation; they are to be purged by fire. The Heavens must thus be purified, since they have so long been the abode of Satan and his wicked hosts (Eph. 6:12). And the Earth will by this purging be forever freed thenceforth from the curse of

Genesis 3:17-19, and the promise of Isaiah 55:13 will be fulfilled—"Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to Jehovah for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."

2. *There will be no more sea.* This great barrier between the nations will be removed. While there were seas in the Earth as the Earth was replenished and delivered from chaos in Genesis I (see especially verses 9, 10), it may be seriously questioned as to whether the sea was a part of that original creation which was evidently wrecked during the interval that comes in between the first and second verses of that chapter. I am not forgetting that many enlightened writers interpret allegorically the statement, "there was no more sea," but I see no necessity for doing so, and I therefore stick to the old rule, "If the plain sense make good sense, seek no other sense." And yet there is doubtless spiritual teaching here, as well as the literal. The sea in the Bible is a type of the restless and rebellious world. "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked" (Isa. 57: 20, 21). For the present it is Jehovah who

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shuts up the sea with doors, making clouds the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling band for it, and marking out for it his bound, setting bars and doors and saying, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed (Job 38:8-11). Once He allowed the sea to swallow up the Earth, and the waters stood above the mountains, but at His rebuke they fled, and at the voice of His thunder they hasted away; and He hath set a bound that they may not pass over, that they turn not again to cover the Earth (Psa. 104:6-9). Thus does our God deal with the sea of waters and the sea of sin. But the mind of the flesh is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be; and it will be a glad day when there shall be no more sea, and when the Earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah as the waters now cover the sea.

When God Walks in a New Eden

3. *God's dwelling will be with men.* I pass over the second verse concerning the holy city, new Jerusalem, whose description as she will appear during the Millennium is found in Revelation 21:9 to 22:5. What we have in Revelation 21:1-8 is her final state,

after the first Heaven and the first Earth have passed away and given place to the new Heaven and the new Earth. The great point here is that God Himself will then be dwelling with men, holding sweet communion with them, as He did before sin entered into the world and death through sin. The language of the third verse of Revelation 21 is very beautiful. The word translated "dwell" is the same as the word for "tabernacle" (see R. V., margin). "People" should be read "peoples," for the promise is to all peoples, with whom God shall then be dwelling. "The tabernacle of God is with men, and He shall tabernacle with them, and they shall be His peoples, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God."

4. *Death will be no more.* It is written, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." This terrible monster, which for so long has reigned over men through sin, will be utterly obliterated, with all its brood. Tears, sorrow, crying, pain,—all gone, and gone forever! Thanks be to God for the potential abolition of death, even now, for those who have fled to Jesus for refuge! for such He has indeed "abolished death"; by tasting death for us He has delivered us from bondage through fear of death: but how good it

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will be when death shall be wiped out. with everything that belongs to it! As the glorious eighth chapter of Romans assures us, even the groaning creation of "this nether world" shall be delivered from the slavery of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God!

5. *Only God's children will be there.* These are the overcomers—having overcome by the blood of the Lamb. Excluded are all those who, while the door was open, would not enter; these have their portion in the Lake of Fire, which is the second death. No place is found for them in either the new Heaven or the new Earth.

"Then cometh the end." Ah, but *to that "end" there is no end.* Who can fathom the meaning of the language of Ephesians 2:4-7?

But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us,

Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in Heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

The significance of these words is not explained to us, possibly because we could not comprehend even the explanation. These things are too wonderful, they are too high

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for us, they are beyond us. And yet, they are all in store for us. How shall we, in whom, that is in whose flesh, there dwelleth no good thing,—how shall we be able to endure the exceeding and eternal weight of glory that shall be ours in the ages to come? We could not, but for the blood of Christ, in Whom dwelleth all the fulness of the God-head bodily, and in Whom we are complete. Through Him, and only through Him, we enter into “the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.”

“Eternal light! Eternal light!
How pure the soul must be,
When, placed within thy searching sight,
It shrinks not, but with calm delight
Can live and look on thee!

“The spirits that surround thy throne
May bear the burning bliss;
But that is surely theirs alone,
Since they have never, never known
A fallen world like this.

“Oh, how shall I, whose native sphere
Is dark, whose mind is dim,
Before th’ Ineffable appear,
And on my naked spirit bear
That uncreated beam!

“There is a way for man to rise
To that sublime abode;
An Offering and a Sacrifice,
A Holy Spirit’s energies,
An Advocate with God.

“These, these, prepare us for the light
Of majesty above;
The sons of ignorance and night
Can stand in the eternal light
Through the eternal love.”

Prophecy Question Box

Christ Not to Return As Mere Spirit

How shall we be like Him and see Him as He is, if we do not die (or "be changed in the twinkling of an eye")? Do not the Scriptures teach that He will never be seen in the flesh any more, but return a spirit being?—An Alabama Reader.

WE SHALL all either die or be found alive at His coming for us; and, living or dying, "we [that is, all believers] shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" (I Cor. 15:51, 52). But this does not mean that we shall not see Him. The Scriptures do not teach that He will never be seen in the flesh or that He will return a spirit being. On the contrary, they teach that He will return in like manner as He went away, in a body of flesh and bones. See Luke 24:36-40; Acts 1:11; Philippians 3:20, 21; I John 3:1-3.

Who are the Foolish Virgins?

1. To whom do the five foolish virgins of Matthew 25 refer?

2. Is the church going to save the world?—
A Pennsylvania Reader.

THE five foolish virgins represent Jews who at the time of Christ's coming at the end of the Great Tribulation will be professing to believe on Him and to be waiting for Him. They are destitute of oil, which repre-

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sents the Holy Spirit. This shows that their profession is false and that they do not belong to Christ. Compare Zechariah 4:1-6; I John 2:20, 27; Romans 8:9; Jude 19.

2. The church is not appointed to save the world, but to be saved out of the world, and to save out of the world all who believe (John 3:16; Acts 5:14).

What is "The Restitution of All Things?"

Where is there found the harmony of the Scripture in the teaching of damnation? Surely the third of Acts teaches the restoration, or restitution of all things in the resurrection time.
—A California Reader.

THE third of Acts (v. 21) teaches only "the restitution of all things *which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets.*" There is no Scriptural authority for expecting further restitution than this. As for damnation, see the testimony of the True and Faithful Witness, as recorded in Matthew 25:46; Mark 9:42-50; Luke 16:19-31, and John 5:28, 29. It is quite true, as you point out in your letter that the word "damnation" in such passages as John 5:29 might be correctly translated "judgment." But that could make no difference to a lost man. For him, judgment is damnation.

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Hell Punishment Not "Corrective"

A prominent religious teacher here is teaching that God's purpose in Hell punishment is corrective and that eventually every soul in Hell, even Satan himself, will be converted, so that "all things shall be in subjection to" God. If "eternal" means only "age-lasting," what about "the eternal God" and "the everlasting Father?"—A Pennsylvania Reader.

PRECISELY so. In Matthew 25:46, for example, the same Greek adjective occurs twice—the word *aionian*. First, it describes the duration of life for the saved: it is eternal; second, it describes the duration of punishment for the lost: it is everlasting. But we are not confined to this one word, by any means, in arriving at the truth concerning eternal punishment. Our Lord settles the matter for us in such passages as Mark 9:42-48 and Luke 16:19-31. These passages offer no hope for those who depart this life out of Christ; nor, indeed, do any other portions of God's Word.

When Will the New Temple Be Built?

Does the temple have to be built in Jerusalem before Christ comes? If so, how is it possible to contend that "Christ may come at any moment?"—A California Reader.

THERE must be a Temple in Jerusalem before Christ comes the second time to the *Earth*, but not before His coming into the *air*

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to catch us up unto Himself. It is this coming to catch us away that may occur at any moment. The seven years of Daniel's Seventieth Week, which will intervene between our catching up and the Return of Christ to Judgment, will prove ample time for the rebuilding of the temple and all the other things that must be accomplished before Christ's Return as King. The mosque of Omar, now occupying the ancient temple site, could be transformed into a magnificent temple within a short time

No Justification for Polygamy

Would not your statement in the issue of March 22 concerning the two wives of Jehovah—the Old Testament wife who proved recreant, and the New Testament bride—give support to the claim of the Mormon teachers that Christ was a polygamist?—A Pennsylvania Reader.

JEHOVAH is a name which is used interchangeably in the Bible, and applied sometimes to the Father and sometimes to the Son. Israel is pictured in the Scriptures as the unfaithful and now disowned wife of Jehovah the Father. The church is the bride of Christ the Son. There is no polygamy even in figure there.

PROPHECY QUESTION BOX

Will Any Christians Die in the Millennium?

You say there are two resurrections, and that the first is only of the saved, and the second only of the lost. Will there be any of Christ's followers during the thousand years, between those resurrections, and if so, and if they die, what will become of them if they rise not?—An Ohio Reader.

SCRIPTURE gives no clear answer to this series of questions, and inferential conclusions in connection with Bible study are dangerous. That there will be conversions during the Millennium is clear enough, and it is also certain that *sinners* will die during that period. As to what will happen when a sinner is born again during the thousand years, one cannot speak positively. In the account of the second resurrection, given in Revelation 20, there is no intimation that any one in that throng assembled before the Great White Throne has his name recorded in the Lamb's Book of Life. From this it may be inferred (but, remember, inferences are dangerous) either that no saints die during the Millennium, or that, if they die, they are immediately raised from the dead. See Isaiah 65:19-25.

Confusing Rapture and Revelation

What Scripture have we to indicate that the unbelieving world shall not see Jesus when He appears?

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Will every believer be caught up? The following passages seem to show a discrimination:

“Unto all them also that love His appearing.”

“Unto them that look for Him shall He appear.”

But if all the “dead in Christ” are raised, would you not think that all the living in Christ would be caught up? And yet if He will appear to those who do not look for Him (and they are many), it seems to make these Scriptures foolishness and void. I have puzzled much about this.—A Washington State Reader.

YOU seem to have the Rapture and the Revelation confused here. At the Rapture of the saved, when they are caught up to meet the Lord in the air, the unbelieving world will probably hear nothing, and see nothing, except that the saved ones are all missing. This is typified by the rapture of Enoch, who walked with God, and one day he was gone. In the language of Scripture, “he was not; for God took him” (Gen. 5:24). The Scriptures you quote (II Tim. 4:8 and Heb. 9:28) find their primary application in connection with the Second Coming of Christ *to the Earth* (the Revelation), rather than to His presence in the air to receive His own (the Rapture). In the days of His *appearing*, in the clouds of Heaven with power and glory, coming to judge and to make war, “every eye shall see Him” indeed, but to those who at that time, having turned to

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Him since the Rapture, shall be looking for Him and loving His appearing, He will bring salvation and reward.

What Does the Number 666 Mean?

Who is the Beast in Revelation 13, having seven heads and ten horns? What are the seven heads and the ten horns? What was the deadly wound that was healed? Who or what is the second Beast with two horns, which looks like a lamb and speaks like a dragon? What is the number 666, or who is it, or he?

Who and what was Pontifex Maximus? Who was the first Pope of Rome, and was he the Apostle Peter? Who is the woman of Revelation 17, arrayed in purple and scarlet? Is the Babylon referred to a city, a nation, or a person? Who are the seven kings mentioned in the tenth verse, and who the ten kings in the twelfth verse?—A Georgia Reader.

THE Beast out of the sea is the Roman Empire, seen in the person of its Emperor, who shall occupy its throne when the Empire shall have been revived, in the end-time. The ten horns are ten Kings, or Kingdoms, which give their power to the Beast, that is, they become a part of the Empire. The picture corresponds with the seventh chapter of Daniel. The Beast is the "little horn" of Daniel 7:8, 24, who begins by subduing three of the ten Kings, thus leaving "*seven* heads." The deadly wound which was healed was the Empire itself, which,

after being so long reckoned as dead, shall have been restored to life.

The Second Beast is the False Prophet, the ecclesiastical head, as the Emperor is the political head, of the revived Roman Empire. This False Prophet looks like a lamb and speaks like a dragon: like all false Prophets, he claims to represent Christ, but his doctrine is the doctrine of devils.

The number 666 is man's number, thrice repeated, as explained by the text itself,—it is "the number of man," man's number. It indicates man's failure to accomplish completeness without God, even though aided by the immense power of Satan. The number is always 6, it is never 7. Seven is God's number, and 6 is man's.

Pontifex Maximus is a title worn by the Popes as head of the priestly college in ancient Rome. Peter was never a Pope, and was probably never in Rome at all. There were no Popes for eight hundred years after the death and resurrection of Christ. It is impossible to say who was the first Pope, for there were many Bishops of Rome who sought Papal recognition and power before it was finally accorded to any of them.

The woman of Revelation 17 is apostate Christendom, headed up in the Papal system.

The Babylon referred to there is the same thing as the woman; it is ecclesiastical Babylon as distinguished from political Babylon. Ecclesiastical Babylon is Roman Catholicism and apostate Christendom generally, while political Babylon is the revived Roman Empire, headed by the Beast-King of the end-time. The seven kings are identical with the seven heads, and the ten kings with the ten horns, of Revelation 13:1, already explained.

What and When is the First Resurrection?

It is in general stated and accepted that the saints will not pass through the Great Tribulation, but be caught up before that takes place,—and I grant that there seems to be considerable ground for believing this,—but I cannot harmonize it with what Paul says in I Thessalonians 4:16, that “the dead in Christ shall rise first,” and what is stated in Revelation 20:4, 5. From verse 4 it is plain that the first resurrection takes place after the Great Tribulation, while, if the living saints are not to precede the dead ones (I Thess. 4:16), it should take place before the Tribulation. Provided that you accept the general belief, how would you explain these things?

I am much interested in prophecy, and especially that part which relates to Christ's coming and contemporary events. I became a subscriber to *The Sunday School Times* in order to be able to read your articles.—A Wisconsin Reader.

UNQUESTIONABLY, the church is taught, in I Thessalonians 4 and other Scriptures, that the coming of the Lord for us is imminent—that it may occur at any moment; and that when it occurs it will be accompanied by the resurrection of all those who have up to that moment fallen asleep in Jesus. There can be no Great Tribulation before this great impending event, for we are constantly exhorted to wait, not for the Great Tribulation, but for the Lord from Heaven.

It is also equally clear that in Revelation 20 we are taught that certain martyrs of the Great Tribulation are raised from the dead at its close, leaving only the lost—"the rest of the dead"—to be raised at the close of the Millennium. In connection with the raising of the Tribulation saints, in Revelation 20: 4-6, it is written, "This is the first resurrection." But we are not by all this forced to believe that the Tribulation saints — who alone are raised at that time (Rev. 20:4)—constitute the whole number having part in the first resurrection. The teaching that the first resurrection includes all those raised at the Rapture, as well as those raised at the end of the Great Tribulation is not only reasonable but Scriptural.

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“The hour” of spiritual resurrection, passing from death unto life, spoken of in John 5:24, 25, which “is coming, and now is,” has embraced a period of nearly two thousand years; and “the hour” of physical resurrection, referred to in John 5:28, 29, which “is coming,” and “in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice and come forth,” will stretch over the Millennium itself, and include both “the resurrection of life” and “the resurrection of damnation.”

Why, then, should not “the first resurrection” include all those raised before the Millennium, as the second resurrection will include all those raised after the Millennium? To believe this is reasonable.

Then, too, it is Scriptural, for it is in keeping with the Levitical types. In the great calendar chapter, Leviticus 23, the resurrection of Christ is typified by the wave-sheaf of the firstfruits presented to God on the first day of the week “on the morrow after the sabbath” (verses 9-14). Then comes the church, in another wave-offering—“the bread of the firstfruits for a wave-offering before Jehovah” (verses 15-21). This includes the completion of the church and her presentation to God in resurrection and Rapture. After that, in verse 22, the raising of the

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Tribulation saints is pictured as the gleanings of the harvest. Compare I Corinthians 15: 22, 23 and James 1:18.

How good it is to know that the Lord Jesus has delivered us from the wrath to come, and that therefore we are not appointed unto wrath but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him (I Thes. 1:9, 10; 5:9, 10)!

"Out Resurrection from Among Dead Ones"

To what did Paul refer in Philippians 3:11—
"If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead?"—An Illinois Reader.

THE matter is not perfectly clear to me, but I believe Paul was expressing his hope that he might live until the first resurrection, and thus pass into the Lord's presence without death. Rotherham translates the verse: "If by any means I may advance to the earlier resurrection, which is from among the dead." The description of this earlier resurrection is very vivid in the Greek Testament: it is the *ex anastasin ek nekron*, which is, literally, the out-resurrection from among the dead ones. Paul believed it possible that this might occur before his death, just as we believe it possible before ours. This is the normal Christian attitude.

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Elijah Will Reappear

What is "the great and dreadful Day of the Lord" mentioned in Malachi 4:5? Are we to look for a second coming of Elijah, or is that prophecy answered by John the Baptist? Has Revelation 11:8-12 any bearing on a second appearance of Elijah and possibly Enoch (the "two witnesses")?—A Connecticut Reader.

THE Day of the Lord is that period beginning with the coming of Christ to judge and make war (Revelation 19). Elijah must first come, since the Jews did not receive John Baptist (Matt. 11:14; 17:10-13). Elijah is undoubtedly one of the two witnesses of Revelation 11. Who the second one may be is uncertain.

"In Christ" the Key to the Rapture

In the Weymouth edition, Hebrews 12:14, we read: "Strive for peace with all men, and for that growth in holiness apart from which no one will see the Lord." Does this mean we would not see Him, should He come, unless we are growing more holy? Hebrews 9:28, note (10) at the bottom of the page, says: "Imperfectly sanctified believers, missing the sight of Him." Does this imply that humble Christians will be left behind?—A Reader.

I DO NOT know what Weymouth may have meant to teach, but certainly the Scriptures teach that no Christian will be left behind. Every born-again person will be taken, since he is "in Christ." This is the

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key. "The dead in Christ" and the living "in Christ" will all go. See I Corinthians 15: 22, 23, 51, 54; I Thessalonians 4:13-18. Christ himself is our sanctification, our holiness (I Cor. 1:30, 31).

Salvation During the Tribulation

Will people be saved during the Tribulation period?—A Reader.

YES, and great numbers of them. Read the seventh chapter of The Revelation in the Revised Version, particularly the fourteenth verse.

"Unto the Ages of the Ages"

Please explain the meaning of "unto" in the expression, "unto the ages of the ages." Does it ever mean "until?"—A Maine Reader.

ITHINK not. The expression means unlimited duration.

The Seat of the Judging Church

Where, as you understand it, will the church be, or where its place, as it "judges the world" in the Millennium? Here on the Earth, or "in the air?"—A Connecticut Reader.

THE bride, the Lamb's wife, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of Heaven from God situated over the Earth in the air, is evidently the church in her Millennial glory. But doubtless the saints will have free ac-

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cess to both the Heavenly and Earthly cities, as well as to all the cities of Earth during that period.

The Origin of Postmillennialism

1. How could Christ reign from Jerusalem, without putting those living at a distance from there at a disadvantage?

2. Is time-setting coupled with premillennialism?

3. Is it true that premillennialism is a seed-plot for faddists?

4. Does premillennialism cut the nerve of missionary and evangelistic effort?

5. How old is postmillennialism, and who or what brought it about? — A Saskatchewan Reader.

CHRIST is omnipotent and omniscient. His ruling from Jerusalem would not be a disadvantage to any one.

2. Time-setting is not a necessary part of premillennialism. "Timists" have done much to bring premillennialism into disrepute.

3. Satan has associated many fads with premillennialism, for that is a sure way to drive many timid souls from its study.

4. Premillennialism is a great incentive to missionary and evangelistic effort. The great majority of missionary leaders and missionaries are premillennialists, as are practically all evangelists, including Moody, Torrey, and Chapman.

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5. While Origen was the father of the school of allegorizing the Scriptures, it remained for Daniel Whitby, who lived in the seventeenth century, to put forth the definite doctrine of "postmillennialism," in what he called a new hypothesis. Up to Origen's time postmillennialism was unknown, and even after that and up to Whitby's time "post-millennialism" was by no means widespread in the church. The "premillennial" doctrine of the coming of Christ was almost universally accepted in the Christian church for sixteen centuries.

Four Questions

1. What is the interpretation of Revelation 3:9 in its possible application to Adventists and Mormons?

2. Is there Biblical authority for expecting a great revival of spirituality just before the Rapture?

3. Will the faithful of the Old Testament dispensation go to Heaven, or will they be re-instated in the Land?

4. In the Tribulation period will men have to go back to the Mosaic institutions for their access to God, or will some new plan be revealed that is not wholly clear to-day?—A Wisconsin Reader.

ANSWERING question 1, Revelation 3:9 applies to any one who claims to be a Jew and is not.

2. I know of no authority for expecting such a revival.

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3. Israel will inherit the Earth during the Kingdom age. I believe that the whole nation of Israel, including those who lived and died during the dispensations before "grace," and who believed, and were saved through that belief, will inherit the Earth for the millennial age. I am not able to dogmatize about it, although I have no possible doubt in my own mind.

4. Salvation in the Tribulation period will come through believing the testimony of the Jewish Remnant as to the coming King and Kingdom.

When "The Day of the Lord" Begins

Every book which I have read on premillennialism states that the church will be caught up into the air before the Tribulation. Revelation 3:10 is used as a proof-text of the fact that the church shall not be in the hour of trial or Tribulation. In II Thessalonians 2:1-12 Paul teaches that the Day of the Lord will not be except the falling away come first and the man of sin be revealed. When the Lord does come, it is to destroy the man of sin, or Antichrist. If the Lord is not going to come for the dead in Christ and the living in Christ until the man of sin is to be destroyed, it stands to reason that the Antichrist's history has been completed or run its course. If the Tribulation is to be in the reign of Antichrist, then the church must be included in the Tribulation.—A Long Island Reader.

YOUR perplexity comes from confusing two things that differ: namely, the *coming of the Lord* for His church (which precedes the Tribulation) and "*the Day of the Lord*" (which follows the Tribulation). This latter expression, "the Day of the Lord," is frequently found in the Scripture, and it always speaks of the time of judgment beginning with the Lord's personal return to the Earth as Son of Man to take up His great power and reign. This doctrine is found in the Old Testament, as well as in the New. But the coming of the Lord for His people is a new doctrine in the New Testament, first revealed to Paul, and first made known by him in I Thessalonians 4:13-18 and other Epistles to the Churches. This is the ever imminent event, and nothing is prophesied to occur before it comes to pass.

"Recognition" in Heaven and Hell

1. Please explain Matthew 27:52, 53. How could the corruptible bodies of the saints come up out of their graves and be seen of many?
2. What is the incorruptible body?
3. Does the sinner go directly to Hell when he dies?
4. Do the saved in Heaven know anything about their parents and children in this world, or is that all forgotten?
5. Do the saved know each other in Heaven?
6. Do the lost know each other in Hell?—
A Michigan Reader.

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I CANNOT explain it, though I thoroughly believe it. Doubtless the corruptible bodies were "changed" at their raising.

2. The incorruptible body is the transformed body of a saved person at the resurrection (I Cor. 15:51-54). It will be like Christ's resurrection body (Phil. 3:20, 21, R. V.).

3. No. He goes to Hades, awaiting the resurrection and judgment, after which he is cast into the Lake of Fire, which is Hell (Rev. 20:4-13).

4. I doubt not that the saved in Heaven know all that they knew here, and much more.

5. Yes.

6. Yes. (In connection with these questions, study carefully our Lord's teaching in Luke 16:19-31.)

Premillennialism and the Kingdom

Is it true, as charged by a certain writer (1) that premillennialism teaches that the Kingdom of God is not yet here, and will not be until Christ comes; (2) that premillennialism ignores Christ's command to preach the Gospel to the whole world; (3) that premillennialism teaches that when Christ comes again the whole Mosaic system will be restored, including the offering of bloody sacrifices; or (4) that the whole world is to go up every week to Jerusalem to attend the feast and offer sacrifices?—An Ohio Reader.

I CANNOT speak for all premillennialists, but I teach, and, so far as I am aware, premillennialists generally agree (1) that while the Kingdom of God is already established wherever men or angels are subject to God's will, and that men who are born again are at once brought into that Kingdom, yet there is a literal Kingdom of Heaven to be set up one day upon the Earth, centering in Jerusalem, with the Son of God occupying David's throne and ruling over the whole Earth; (2) that the blessed hope of Christ's coming is God's greatest incentive to missionary endeavor; most of the great missionary leaders have been and are premillennialists, including J. Hudson Taylor, Andrew Murray, D. L. Moody, J. Wilbur Chapman, C. I. Scofield, and many others; (3) that Jerusalem will be the center of the world religiously as well as politically, and that the final chapters of Ezekiel pertain to that time when the Kingdom shall be here in manifestation; and (4) that all the families of the Earth shall go up yearly (not weekly) to worship the Lord and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles at Jerusalem, according to Zechariah 14:16-21.

Old Testament Saints and the Church

Why are not the Old Testaments saints included in the church?—A Missouri Reader.

THEY will be included in the Rapture, for they are among those who "sleep in Jesus." They were saved by his death, as truly as are we (Rom. 3:25; Heb. 9:15). And yet they are not in the church, which did not come into existence until the second chapter of Acts. Our Lord's only references to the church were to something then future. He did not say, "I have built," nor "I am building," but "I will build My church."

Who Holds Palestine Now?

I am told that the Jews have already gone back to Jerusalem in large numbers, and are now recognized as a regularly constituted nation. Is this true?—A Michigan Reader.

NO. THERE are many Jews in Jerusalem and throughout the Land, but the British are holding the reins of government, pending the action of the Allies as to the future of Palestine.

"As the Waters Cover the Sea"

Will the Millennial glory be confined to Palestine, or will it take in the whole Earth?—A Georgia Reader.

IT WILL cover the whole Earth, as the waters cover the sea.

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Will There Be Any Saints in the Tribulation?

Why do you teach that the saints will not be in the Great Tribulation?—A Texas Reader.

I DO not so teach. God will have saints in the Great Tribulation, but they will be those who have turned to the Lord after the church is caught away. What I am insisting upon is that the church will not go into the Tribulation. She is delivered from the coming wrath. Of course, by "the church" I mean those born again during this age. No mere professors are included in that term as here used.

The Remnant and the "Whole House"

How may I distinguish between the Old Testament prophecies relating to Israel's restoration from the Babylonian captivity, and the final restoration?—A New Mexico Reader.

IT IS quite simple, when you remember that the post-captivity restoration was that of a small remnant, while the final restoration is to be of the "whole house of Israel." See, for example, Ezekiel 37.

God's Reckonings and Railway Conductors

How can the church be at once Christ's body and His bride? I can see how my wife and I are "one flesh", but no railway conductor has ever considered us as one body.—An Illinois Reader.

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GOD'S reckonings are often at variance with those of railway conductors. Genesis 2:21-24 and Ephesians 5:25-32 are conclusive. Notice, also, Genesis 5:1, 2—"God . . . called their name Adam." The man and the woman were included in that name. Neither was complete without the other.

Wherein Historicist Interpretations Fail

Wherein lies the fallacy of the historicist interpretations of the book of The Revelation?—
A Canadian Reader.

THE best that can be said for them is that they are often suggestive and interesting, but they do not *fulfil* the prophecies. Too much is left to imagination, which is never God's way. We may confidently expect His Word to be fulfilled to the last jot and tittle.

Children in the Rapture

Will the children of those who are caught away in the Rapture be taken up also?—A Reader.

IF YOU mean *little* children, too young to accept or reject Christ, I should say yes. Not only such little children as have believing parents, but *all* such little children. Christ died for the sins of the whole world, and little children are safe in Him during their infancy. When they die, their spirits

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(and their souls also) go to Him in Heaven; and while they live they are under His care. Therefore, since the Rapture is to include all "they that are Christ's at His coming," it will include all the little folks. There will be no babies in Hell, for they will all be in Heaven; which is another great reason for wanting to go to Heaven ourselves.

Only Their Bodies Are "Asleep."

How can the dead in Christ be now "with their Lord" as you say, when the Word says they are asleep?—A Virginia Reader.

THEIR bodies are asleep, awaiting the resurrection; their spirits and souls are "absent from the body, and at home with the Lord" (II Cor. 6:8).

When Jews will be Missionaries

1. Will the Jews be missionaries during the time between the taking away of the church and the visible coming of the Lord?
2. Will they preach the coming of Christ during the time of Tribulation?
3. Will the Spirit be taken away with the bride?—A Colorado Reader.

YES. It is written, "They shall declare My glory among the Gentiles" (Isa. 66:19).

2. They will preach "the Gospel of the Kingdom," saying, "Repent, for the Kingdom

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of Heaven is at hand" (Matt. 10:7). "And this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matt. 24:14).

3. He will be "taken away" as the Restrainer of iniquity (II Thes. 2:7); but, since He is omnipresent, He will still be on Earth, as He was on Earth in Old Testament times.

The Number of Man

In commenting on Revelation 13:18, you say: "It is the number of man, or man's number. Man's number is six. The Beast King's number is a trinity of sixes—666." What are your reasons for this conclusion? Is not the King an individual?—A New Jersey Reader.

THE Beast King is undoubtedly an individual, but he is human, though energized by Satan; and his failure fully to do works like the works of God will demonstrate that, after all, he is only a man. Compare Ezekiel 28:9, where the Prince of Tyre doubtless prefigures the Beast King of the end time, as the *King* of Tyre (vs. 12-19) typifies Satan as "the power behind the throne." See also Psalms 9:20 and 10:18.

"Bride" and "Body"

Are the bride of Christ and the body of Christ constituted of the same persons?—A New Jersey Reader.

YES; and those persons are the born-again ones of the present dispensation (I Cor. 12:12, 13; Eph. 1:22, 23; 5:25-32; compare Gen. 2:21-24).

A Bible "Tale of Two Cities"

1. Are the Jews to inherit Palestine and the Earthly Jerusalem, or the Heavenly Jerusalem?

2. Is the "city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" the Heavenly or the Earthly Jerusalem?—A Michigan Reader.

THE Jews are an Earthly people, with Earthly promises. Palestine and the Earthly Jerusalem are to be theirs for ever (Gen. 17:8; Amos 9:14, 15).

2. The "city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God," is undoubtedly the Heavenly Jerusalem. Abraham "looked for" it (Heb. 11:10), and doubtless will have an interest in it, for he is the father of all believers, whether of the circumcision or of the uncircumcision (Rom. 4:11, 12).

Who is the Woman?

Of whom is the woman referred to in Isaiah 66:7 and Revelation 12:1 a type?—A Minnesota Reader.

BOTH point to Israel, "of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came" (Rom. 9:5).

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When the Gentile Age Began

When did the Gentile age begin? — An Ohio Reader.

THE Times of the Gentiles" began with Nebuchadnezzar's rule in Jerusalem, 606 B. C. In the year after the battle of Carchemish, the vassalage of Judah was transferred to Babylon, and Jerusalem has been "trodden down of the Gentiles" ever since. This is to continue, according to our Lord's testimony in Luke 21:24, "until the Times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

Those Invited Guests

Who are those (Rev. 19:9) who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb, if the church is the bride?—A New York Reader.

THEY may include all the saved of past ages. The church consists only of those saved during the present dispensation. Compare Psalm 45:9-15.

Can a Christian be Lost?

1. Kindly explain Revelation 3:4, "But thou hast a few names in Sardis that did not defile their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy."

2. Would it be possible for a Christian to be rejected at last?—A Canadian Reader.

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THOSE referred to in Revelation 3:4 are Christians who have walked with God in separation. For this there is reward (see I Cor. 3:11-15).

2. A Christian may be *rejected* in the sense of being disapproved (*adokimos*—I Cor. 9:27). No child of God will be *lost* (John 10:27-30).

Is Prophecy always Literally Fulfilled?

Has all prophecy been fulfilled with absolute literalness? Explain Jeremiah 30:9; Ezekiel 34:23; Hosea 3:5.—A South Carolina Reader.

MUCH prophecy remains to be fulfilled; but all *fulfilled* prophecy has been fulfilled literally. The passages you cite belong in the realm of unfilled prophecy, all of which will be fulfilled, and *literally* fulfilled, in due time. "God is not a man, that He should lie" (Num. 23:19).

The Mosque of Omar and the Next Temple

1. Will the mosque of Omar be removed (under protection of some strong political powers) before the erection of the Tribulation temple?

2. Will the temple be built before the reign of Antichrist begins?

3. Does any one know where the ark of the covenant is?—A California Reader.

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THE Mosque of Omar, now occupying the temple site in Jerusalem, may be converted into a temple for Jewish worship. This need not consume a long period of time.

2. It is not necessary that there should be a Jewish temple in existence when the Beast begins to reign, but there must be one in Jerusalem at the breaking of the covenant "in the midst of Daniel's seventieth week of years" (Dan. 9:27).

3. John saw the ark of the covenant in Heaven (Rev. 11:19). Another ark may be provided for the Tribulation temple.

The Duration of the First Resurrection

Is not the First Resurrection a somewhat prolonged affair, so as to include the taking up of those who had not worshipped the Beast, spoken of in Revelation 20:4?—A Florida Reader.

YES; the First Resurrection includes those who are Christ's at the time of the Rapture, as well as the Tribulation saints who are killed for their testimony under the Beast's reign (I Cor. 15:22, 23, 51-54; I Thes. 4:13-18; Rev. 20:4-6).

Tribulation and Trumpets

1. Will the church be kept from the hour of "Tribulation" (Rev. 3:10), or suffer part of it, being saved out of it as some believe?

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2. Will not the Rapture take place before the middle of the Tribulation?

3. Is the seventh trumpet of The Revelation identical with "the last trump," at which the dead in Christ shall rise?—An Iowa Reader.

THE whole church (that is, all born-again ones) will be caught up before the Great Tribulation begins.

2. The Rapture of the church is the next thing in the revealed program. It may occur at any moment.

3. No; the last trump of I Corinthians is not a trumpet of angels at all; it is "*the trump of God*" (I Thes. 4:16).

Why Wish to Escape the Tribulation?

1. I have been wondering just what necessity, apart from the needs of a certain theory, there is for handing a large part of the Olivet Discourse over to the Jewish remnant of the Tribulation period.

2. If it is true that there are to be many conversions during the Tribulation period, and many more during the Millennium, how are we to preach the coming so that it may be a warning to the unsaved now? How can Christ's coming be a terror to the unprepared, if men are still to be converted in great numbers afterward?—An Iowa Reader.

IT IS not at all a question of "the needs of a certain theory," for the writer of these notes has no zeal for theories, except as they conform to the teaching of the Word of God; but to this writer it grows more and more

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certain that Matthew is a Jewish book throughout, and distinctly the Gospel of the Kingdom.

2. It is perfectly plain that there *are* to be conversions during the Great Tribulation; but to escape the awful horrors of the Tribulation is surely an incentive to move men to action now.

Four Questions about the End-Time

1. Is the church, the bride of Christ, complete at the time of the Rapture, or do the Tribulation saints constitute a part of it?

2. Does the company spoken of in Revelation 7:9 include Jewish martyrs, as well as Gentiles?

3. Does the company mentioned in Revelation 20:4 reign with the church? If not, what is their relation to it, and where do they reign?

4. Are the companies mentioned in Revelation 6:9, 10; 7:9; and 20:4 the same?—A Michigan Reader.

THE church will be complete before it is caught up. The Tribulation saints are not included in the church.

2. No; the preceding verses in the chapter refer to Jews.

3. The statement is that they reign "with Christ." Their relation to the church is not shown.

4. Yes; except that in Revelation 6:9 the company is not complete.

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Who are the Four-and-Twenty Elders?

1. Will the "sheep" and "brethren" of Matthew 25, after passing through the Millennium, have their bodies changed before passing into the eternal state?

2. Whom do the four-and-twenty elders represent (Rev. 4:10)?

3. If Revelation 7:14 alludes to the believers who died for the testimony of Jesus, the first resurrection having previously occurred, when will their bodies be raised?

4. What are represented by the woman, the child, and the flood, in Revelation 12?

5. If Jerusalem be suspended in the air over the Earth in the eternal age, how can the nations bring their glory and honor into it, if they are on the Earth, and walk in its light? (Rev. 21:24.)

6. What is your idea of the tree of life, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations? (Rev. 22:2.)

THE Scriptures do not yield an answer to this question.

2. The enthroned church. Twenty-four is the number of priesthood (I Chron. 24:4) and the thrones (not "seats") on which the elders sit suggest royalty. The church is a royal priesthood (I Peter 2:9).

3. At the close of the Great Tribulation. In Revelation 20:4 the word "lived" should read "revived" or "lived again."

4. The woman represents Israel; the child is Christ, but here He is seen as including the church which is His body, caught up as soon as fully born; the flood is Satan's

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persecution of Israel during the Great Tribulation.

5. It is not revealed how this is to be done, but only that it will be done.

6. It is God's provision for the Millennium, during which there will still be need of healing for the nations. It will not be so in the eternal state. Contrast Genesis 3:6, 7, and compare Ezekiel 47:12.

The "Out-Resurrection from Among the Dead"

In referring to the "out-resurrection from among the dead ones," might not Paul have in mind the fact that those who are resurrected "out from among the dead" are those who have part in the first resurrection, with all its peculiar blessings or rewards—including an active part in reigning with Christ upon Earth during the thousand years?—An Iowa Reader.

SURELY; for that is what awaits those who have part in the first resurrection.

Will You be a Governor or Mayor?

Is it not consistent with Scripture to believe that the "ruling saints," Kings and Priests of God, will be allotted certain Earthly territory over which to rule in the wisdom supplied by Christ Himself, and which wisdom will be unerring, enabling them to judge justly, meting out inflexible justice?—An Iowa Reader.

YES. "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" (I Cor. 6:2; Luke 19:17-19.)

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An Unwarranted Translation

1. A writer on the Sunday-school lesson on "the Lord's Supper" makes this statement: "He [Jesus] takes the bread and a memorial is instituted that is to be kept till time shall be no more." Is that a proper equivalent of the expression in I Corinthians 11:26: "Ye do show the Lord's death till He come?"

2. What is the meaning of the word "end" in Matthew 24:3, 6, 14—"The end of the world," "The end is not yet," "Then shall the end come?"

3. How reconcile the sixth verse with the thirty-sixth: "The end is not yet," "But of that day and hour knoweth no man," etc.?

4. How can we say Christ may come at any moment when certain events must precede His coming?—A Pennsylvania Reader.

NO. SUCH a translation is unwarranted. "Till He come" is correct.

2. "The end," all through the Olivet Discourse refers to the end of the Jewish age, which synchronizes with the end of the Great Tribulation.

3. There is no need of reconciling them, for there is no discord between them. "That day and hour" are concealed from man, but those who shall be living in Judæa at that time (v. 16) are given instruction in this Discourse, to guide them when the time comes.

4. No events are predicted to precede His coming *for* His people; though there are many events predicted to occur before His coming *with* them at the close of the Tribulation period.

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He is Still Loose!

Was Satan chained on the day of Pentecost? Give Scripture proof, if so.—A Pennsylvania Reader.

NO, HE was not. He still, "as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (I Peter 5:8).

He will Beckon the Babies Up

1. Will young children be in the Rapture?
2. What is the difference between "the body of Christ and "the Kingdom of Christ?"—A California Reader.

YES; all children below the age of accountability will be included, since they are among those who are Christ's. He died for the whole world, including the children; and, since they have not rejected the knowledge of God, they are saved.

2. The body of Christ is the New Testament church; the Kingdom of Christ includes all, of every age, who acknowledge His rule.

Identifying the "Virgins"

1. Who do you think the foolish virgins were?
2. Do you think the 144,000 of Revelation 7 and 14 the same? One calls them servants, and the other virgins.—A California Reader.

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THEY are false Jewish professors of the end time after the church is caught away. The wise virgins are true Jewish believers of the same time.

2. Yes; they are the Jewish remnant of the end time.

The Biggest Census

Will the blessings of Christ's Millennial reign be confined to those comparatively few people who happen to be living on Earth at that time?
—An Illinois Reader.

THEY will not be "comparatively few." Under Christ's beneficent sway the earth will doubtless be peopled as it has never been before.

When Does the Millennium Begin?

1. You quote Revelation 20:4 as referring to "the first resurrection," which I do not question; but is not the worship of the Beast to come after the first resurrection? The passage quoted implies that the Millennium does not begin until seven years after the Rapture of the saints, but do people generally not reckon the Millennium as beginning when the dead are raised?

2. Who is the author of the beautiful verses at the close of your articles on "The Rapture and the First Resurrection?"

3. See I Thessalonians 4:16, 17. How can we avoid the conclusion that all persons then living on the Earth will hear the voice of the archangel and the trump of God?—A Colorado Reader.

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SO FAR as we know, Bible students agree that the Millennium will not begin until the end of Daniel's Seventieth Seven. There will be a resurrection of Tribulation saints at the end of that period, but the Rapture of the church will be at its beginning.

2. The author is unknown to this writer. The hymn is included in Dr. A. J. Gordon's "Coronation Hymnal," and is signed "*Times of Refreshing, 1870.*"

3. The conclusion *is* avoided by many enlightened students, but there is room for difference of opinion.

Preaching and Trading in the Millennium

1. Will evangelism continue during the Tribulation and throughout the Millennium?

2. Will either the saints or the wicked multiply during the Millennium?

3. How and to what extent shall righteousness rule, and how and by whom administered?

4. Will commerce and manufacturing continue during the Millennium?

5. Did the Apostles expect the Lord to return during their lifetime? They speak of the subject in the present tense.—An Ohio Reader.

YES. During the Tribulation the Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in all the world (Matt. 24:14). And, since multitudes will be born during the Millennium, the Gospel must be preached to them also.

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2. Yes, both will multiply, though evil will be restrained until the end of the Millennium and then sifted out, as shown by Revelation 20:7-9.

3. Righteousness will rule absolutely, being administered by the Lord Jesus and His bride, which is the church. See Isaiah 11; Revelation 1:5, 6; 5:9, 10.

4. This must be inferred, though the Scriptures do not explicitly declare it.

5. They believed and taught that He *might* come during their lifetime, and this is the normal position for believers throughout the age.

The League of Nations and Daniel

If the Bible teaches, as I believe, that the Jews are to be restored to Palestine in unbelief before the Second Coming of Christ, do you feel that the terms of the Peace Treaty are sufficient to be considered as a fulfillment of these prophecies? If not, just what is lacking? Do you consider that the political realignment of Europe and the League of Nations could be considered a fulfillment of the prophecies of Daniel in reference to the form of the old Roman Empire at the time of Christ's Second Coming, the League of Nations being the ten-nation confederacy there foretold?—A Virginia Reader.

NO ONE yet knows precisely what the realignment of Europe will be, and therefore it is too early to arrive at conclusions

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along this line; but students of the Word of God cannot fail to be keenly interested in present developments.

Will Christ Come at the Feast of Trumpets?

I should like to ask you if you think, as some do, that the time of Christ's coming in the air for His saints will occur at the Feast of Trumpets or the Jewish New Year?—A South Dakota Reader.

NO. CHRIST'S coming for His saints is to be looked for every day (I Thes. 1:9, 10). Any theory that would defer it until some certain season of the year is mischievous.

If you are "Caught Up" Sinning—What?

Will believers who have died with sins unfessed be brought to confession at the Judgment Seat of Christ, and will wrongs committed against others come into judgment there? Will there be a chance then for such adjustments, and will believers not at peace with each other and who died in that condition, be reconciled?—A Pennsylvania Reader.

THE only possible answer to your question is that under the discerning eye of the Judge of all the earth, everything will be made right, and every one concerned will be satisfied and happy. See I Corinthians 4:5.

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Will Babylon be Rebuilt?

Will Babylon be built again, and become a great wicked, rich city—a seething pot of the vilest sins—and then will God visit her with the awful judgments and punishments as described in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth chapters of Revelation?—A South Dakota Reader.

TEACHERS differ about it. My own view is that the two Babylons of the Revelation are symbolical, one being political and the other religious. Political Babylon is the revived Roman Empire, and ecclesiastical Babylon is apostate Christendom in its last and vilest form, with the true church of God absent.

